

Fagin

the



A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY

Will Eisner

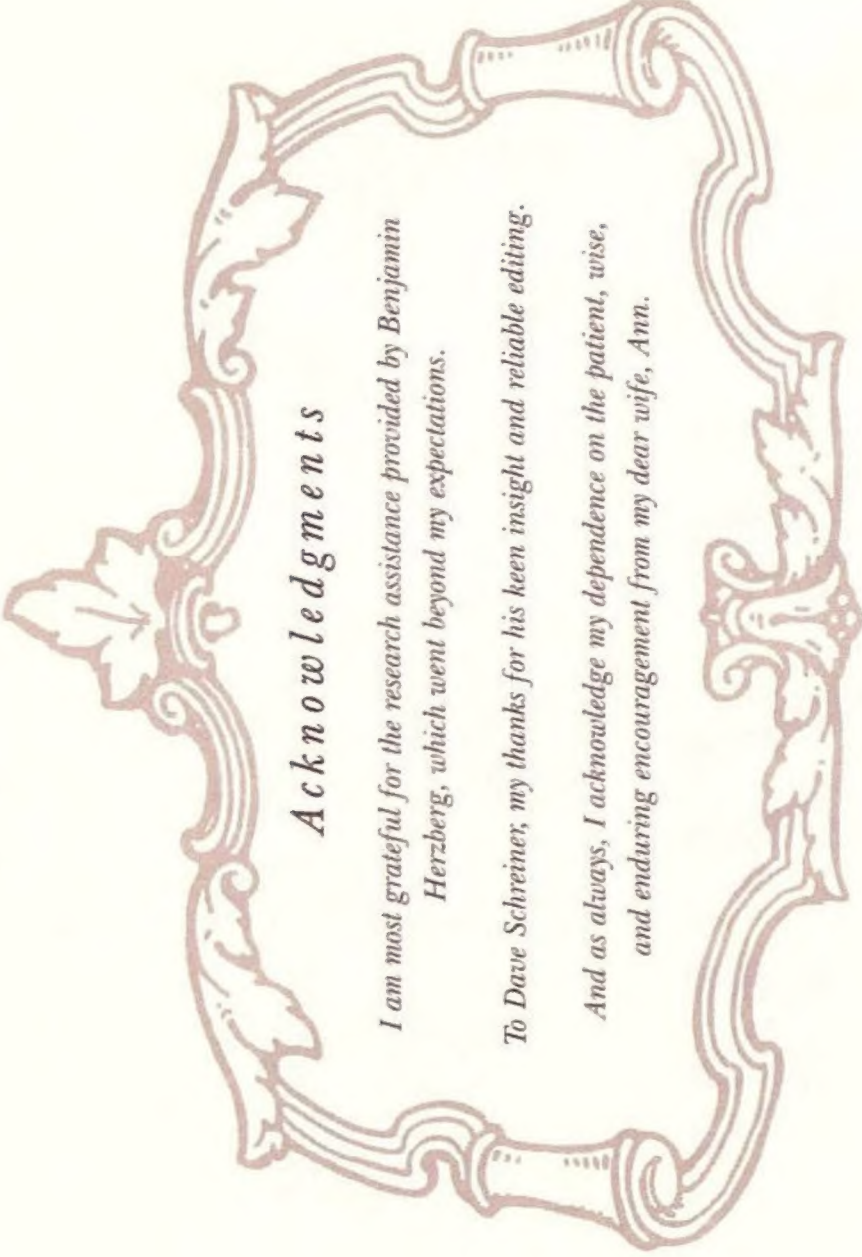
Fagin THE JEW

BY

Will Eisner

DOUBLEDAY

New York London Toronto Sydney Auckland



Acknowledgments

I am most grateful for the research assistance provided by Benjamin Herzberg, which went beyond my expectations.

To Dave Schreiner, my thanks for his keen insight and reliable editing.

And as always, I acknowledge my dependence on the patient, wise, and enduring encouragement from my dear wife, Ann.



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Foreword

In June of 1940, I began a syndicated newspaper comic book insert called *The Spirit*, about a masked crime fighter. It featured a young African American boy, Ebony, as a humorous counterfoil. This was hardly innovative; Jack Benny had Rochester, the movies had Stepin Fetchit, and radio had Amos and Andy. These were accepted stereotypical caricatures of the time. It was an era in our cultural history when the misuse of English based on ethnic origin was fashionable humor. Ebony spoke with the classic "Negro" dialect and delivered a gentle humor that gave warmth to balance the coldness of crime stories. In my eagerness for readership, I thought I was on to a good thing.

In 1945, after an interruption for military service, I returned to the feature. By then, I had become more aware of the social implications of racial stereotypes, and I began to treat Ebony with greater insight. As often happens with cartoonists, I became very fond of him and sought to make him as

real as I imagined him. As the rising civil rights movement became more prominent, I introduced a well-spoken black detective and treated my hero's black assistant in a more sensitive manner.

One day, I received a letter from an old high school classmate who had become a civil rights activist, chiding me for abandoning the "liberal" views we shared back in school. That same day, I got a letter from the editor of a Baltimore Afro-American newspaper commending me on my "fine treatment" of Ebony in my comic strip. These letters alerted me to the reality that, while my stories were designed as entertainment, I was nonetheless feeding a racial prejudice with this stereotype image. Still looking for ethnic diversity, I replaced Ebony with an Eskimo boy and later with Sammy, a white boy. The series ended in 1952, and as I continued my career in instructional comics, I never recognized that my rendering of Ebony, when viewed historically, was in conflict with the rage

I felt when I saw anti-Semitism in art and literature.

While I didn't experience any guilt over my creation of *Ebony*, I became conscious of the problem over the years while teaching sequential art, as my lectures invariably had to confront the issue of stereotype. I concluded that there was "bad" stereotype and "good" stereotype; intention was the key. Since stereotype is an essential tool in the language of graphic storytelling, it is incumbent on cartoonists to recognize its impact on social judgment. In twenty-first-century America, we struggle with "racial profiling." We are in an era that requires graphic portrayals to be sensitive to unfair stereotypes.

So it is with this background and an awareness of the influence of imagery on the popular culture that I began to produce graphic novels with themes of Jewish eth-

nicity and the prejudice Jews still face. A few years ago, as I was examining folktales and literary classics for possible graphic adaptation, I became aware of the origins of the ethnic stereotypes we accept without question. Upon examining the illustrations of the original editions of *Oliver Twist*, I found an unquestionable example of visual defamation in classic literature. The memory of their awful use by the Nazis in World War II, one hundred years later, added evidence to the persistence of evil stereotyping. Combating it became an obsessive pursuit, and I realized that I had no choice but to undertake a truer portrait of Fagin by telling his life story in the only way I could.

This book, therefore, is not an adaptation of *Oliver Twist*! It is the story of Fagin the Jew.

—WILL EISNER, FLORIDA, 2003

**I AM
FAGIN
THE JEW OF
OLIVER TWIST**

**THIS IS MY STORY, ONE THAT
HAS REMAINED UNTOLD AND
OVERLOOKED IN THE BOOK
BY CHARLES DICKENS.**

TARRY
A BIT, MISTER
DICKENS, WHILE
OL' FAGIN HERE
TELLS YOU, SIR,
WHAT I
REALLY WAS
AND HOW
IT ALL
CAME TO BE
!!





I WAS BORN
MOSES FAGIN,
THE ONLY SON
OF ABRAHAM
AND HIS WIFE,
RACHAEL.

SLURP
THEY CAME
FROM BOHEMIA,
HAVING BEEN
EXPELLED
ALONG WITH
THE REST
OF THE JEWS
IN THAT
REGION.

My parents arrived in London along with other Jews fleeing Middle Europe. How they managed the journey, God only knows.

Here they found a better community, where Jews were not subject to special laws or legal pogroms. England was a country that had long been a refuge for Spanish and Portuguese Jews known as Sephardim. They were the earliest to arrive and had become well established, whereas the newly arriving Middle Europeans were regarded as lower class. Germans, Poles, and the like were called Ashkenazim.



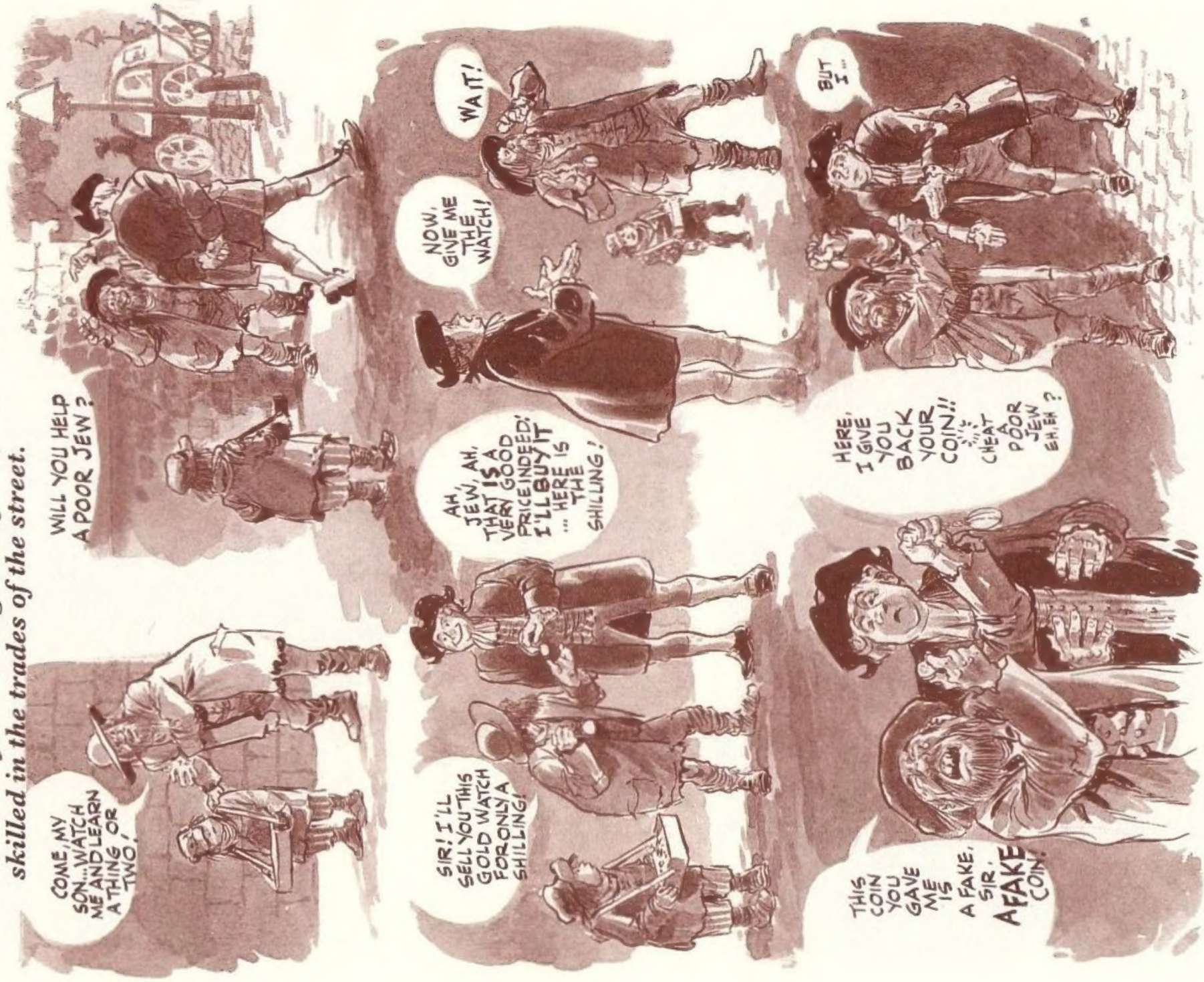


But for us, even London life was not so simple. These were grim times, and yet the best of times for us newcomers. We were uneducated and endured a pauperdom perfumed by the promise of opportunity.

Aye, 'twas, not to put too fine a point on it, a time when opportunity bloomed in the dirty streets of London. It was where, when I was still a mere tyke, my parents put me out to peddle needles and buttons.



I was "educated" by my father, who, having learned by emulating other Jews, had become skilled in the trades of the street.



COME, MY SON!
WE DO NOT DO ANY
BUSINESS WITH RICH
MEN WHO PREY
ON THE POOR!



SO I
DID!

PAPPA... YOU SWITCHED
IT... HIS WAS A GOOD
COIN... BUT YOU GAVE
HIM BACK A BAD
ONE!?



AH, MOSES MY BOY,
THESE ARE TIMES THAT
ASK FOR CERTAIN
SKILLS OF SURVIVAL,
YOU SEE!



*This was the nature of my formative years...
until I neared my thirteenth birthday.*

NOW
MOSES,
IT IS
TIME TO
PREPARE
FOR YOUR
BAR MITZVAH.

OH
NO! NO
MAMMA!
I WANT
TO GO TO
AN ENGLISH
SCHOOL!

A FOOLISH DREAM,
BOY... THAT IS FOR
SEPHARDIM... NOT
FOR US!

WE
WILL
SEND
YOU TO
RABBI
COHEN!



STUDY

...AND YOU,
MOSES? WHY
ARE YOU
CRYING?!

BECAUSE I DON'T
WANT TO BE A JEW
IN THIS COUNTRY.
WE ARE ONLY POOR
BEGGARS HERE.

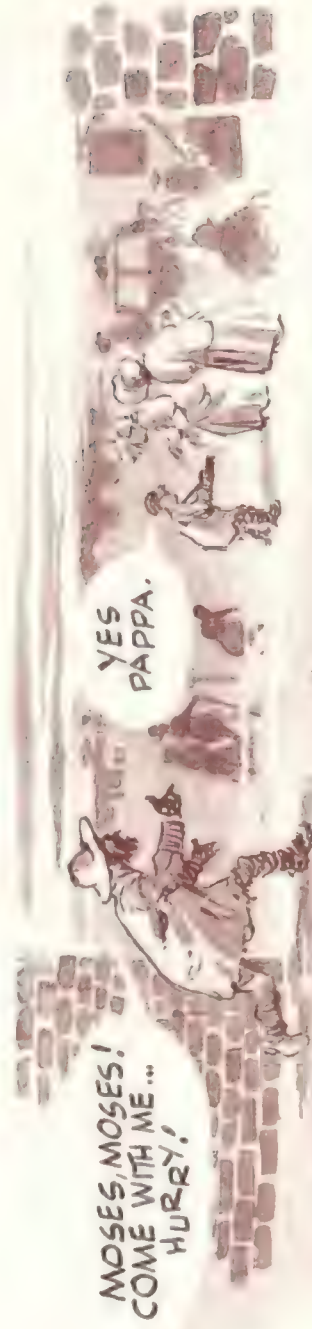
I ASK YOU,
WHERE ELSE IS IT SO
GOOD FOR THE
JEWS... EH? EH?

ENGLAND IS A TOLERANT COUNTRY.
AND WHILE IT IS NOT QUITE A LAND OF
MILK AND HONEY, A JEW CAN MAKE, HERE,
A LIVING... EVEN IF ONE ISN'T FROM
SPAIN OR PORTUGAL... A SEPHARDIC!

HERE WE SEE
THE MONTEFIORIS,
THE GREAT DACOSTA
AND D'ISRAELI FAMILIES
THRIVING... EVEN LORD
GEORGE GORDON, A
PROTESTANT, CONVERTED
AND BECAME A JEW!
...YES, THINGS ARE
GOOD HERE!

ON THE OTHER
HAND, FOR THOSE
WHO CAME LATER
FROM EUROPE... A
LIFE OF BEGGING
AND PEDDLING
IN THE STREET
IS ALL THAT
THEY HAVE!

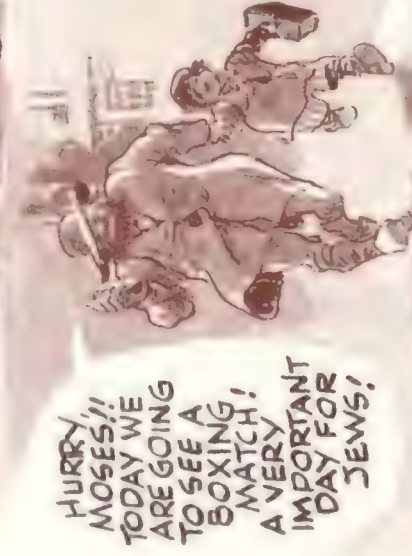
Meanwhile, even as I began my young manhood, I remained in the streets with my father.



MOSES, MOSES!
COME WITH ME...
HURRY!

YES
PAPPA.

TODAY, DANIEL MENDOZA,
OUR GREAT JEWISH BOXER,
WILL FIGHT JOE WARD THE
GENTILE!... HURRY!



HURRY,
MOSES!!
TODAY WE
ARE GOING
TO SEE A
BOXING
MATCH!
A VERY
IMPORTANT
DAY FOR
JEWS!



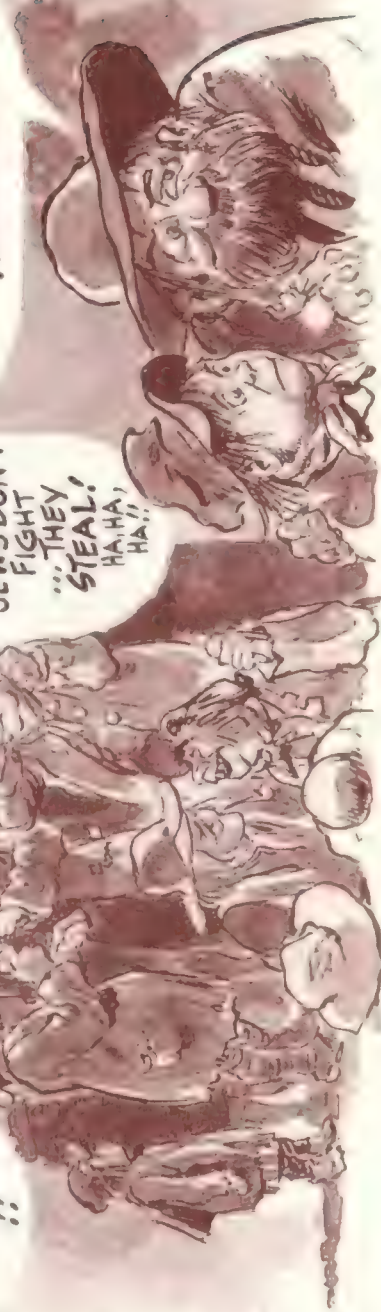
HO!!
WILL ANY-
ONE PLACE
A WAGER
ON THE STAR
OF ISRAEL?
HO!

SIR!!
I WILL
WAGER
ONE SHILLING
ON OUR
MENDOZA
!!

YOU
HAVE
IT!!

THE
JEW
WON'T
WIN!
JEWS DON'T
FIGHT
...THEY
STEAL!
HA, HA,
HA!!

HE WILL WIN, MOSES!
HE WILL WIN, HE HAS
INVENTED A SCIENTIFIC
BOXING... YOU'LL SEE,
YOU'LL SEE!!



SEE HOW HE
DANCES...BACK
AND FORTH, WHILE
HIS OPPONENT ONLY
FLAILS LIKE AN APE!



THEN HE
FLICKS HIM
WITH A QUICK
PUNCH TO THE
FACE!!



SEE
HOW
WARD
SWINGS
BACK
WILDLY!



MENDOZA
IS IN
FULL
CONTROL
NOW!



ROUND
AFTER
ROUND!

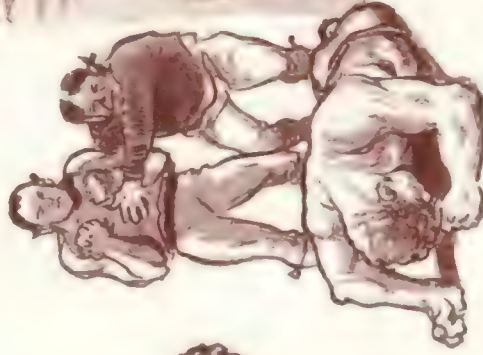




SEE...MENDOZA
NEVER TIRES
... NEVER!!



HURRAH!!
MENDOZA
WINS!



OH
PAPPA,
THEY
FOUGHT
FOR
26
ROUNDS
!

THANK GOD, THANK
GOD!! NOW ENGLAND
WILL KNOW THAT JEWS
CAN FIGHT BACK!



WHERE
ARE WE
GOING,
PAPPA?

TO COLLECT
MY WINNINGS!
...WE SHALL
EAT WELL
TONIGHT!

WAIT OUTSIDE,
MOSES! THIS IS NOT
A PLACE FOR YOU!

GENTLEMEN... I
HAVE COME TO COLLECT
MY WINNINGS!

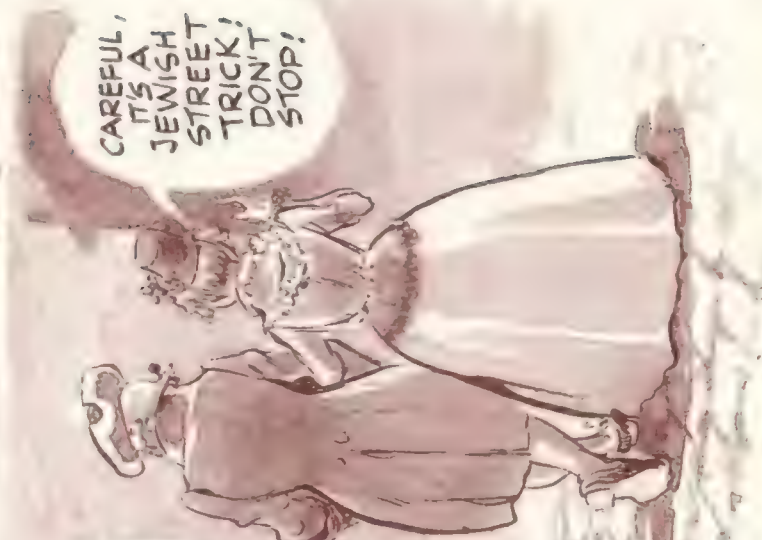
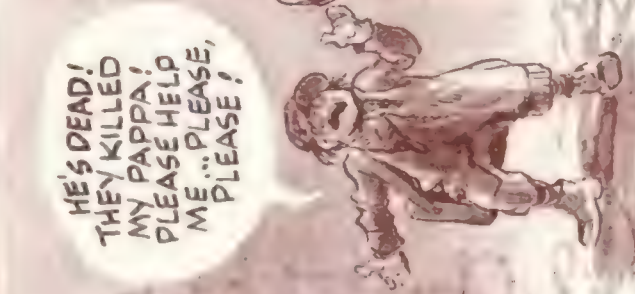
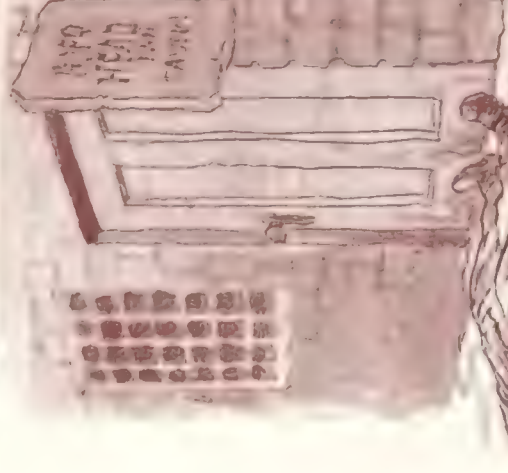
WHAT
WINNINGS
?

ALL
YOU
JEWS ARE
ALIKE!
MONEY,
MONEY,
MONEY!

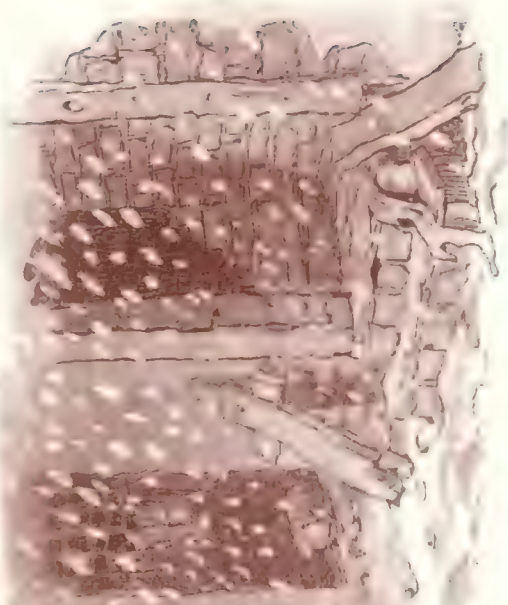
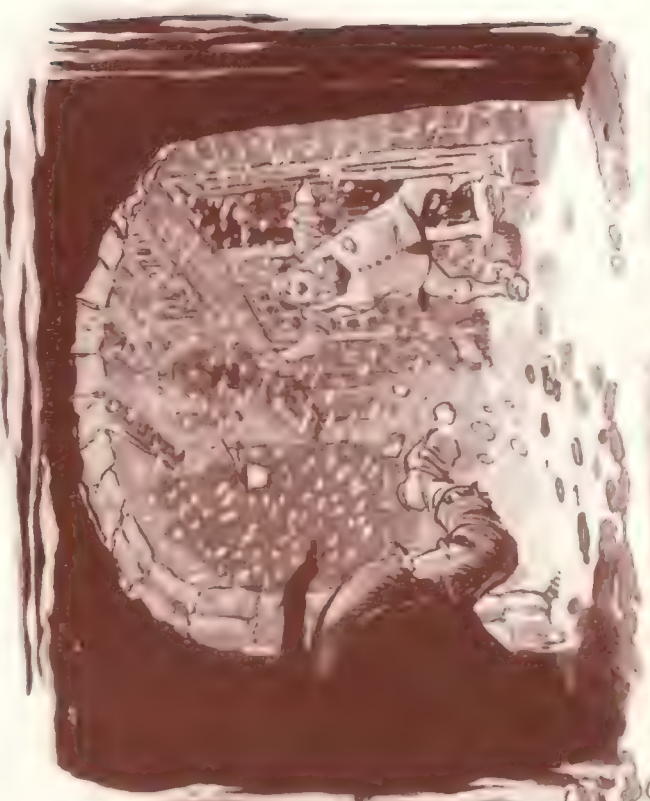
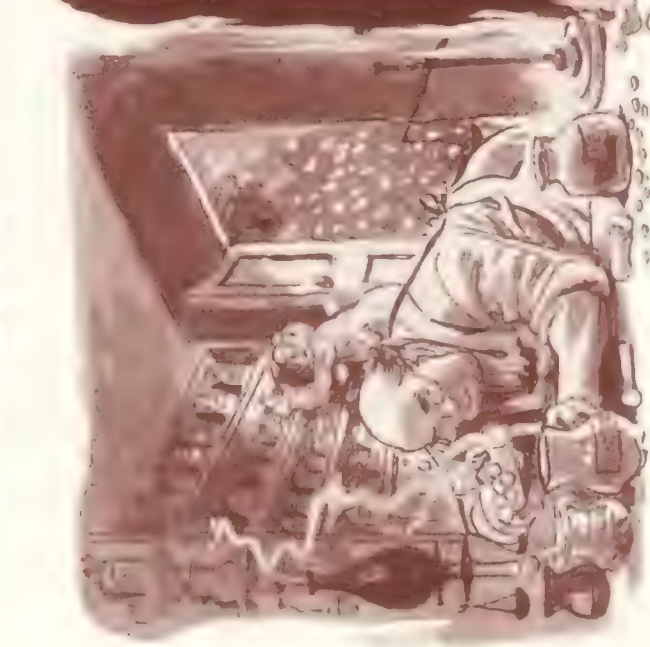
DID ANYONE
SEE HIM MAKE
A WAGER
WITH ME?

NOT
ME!

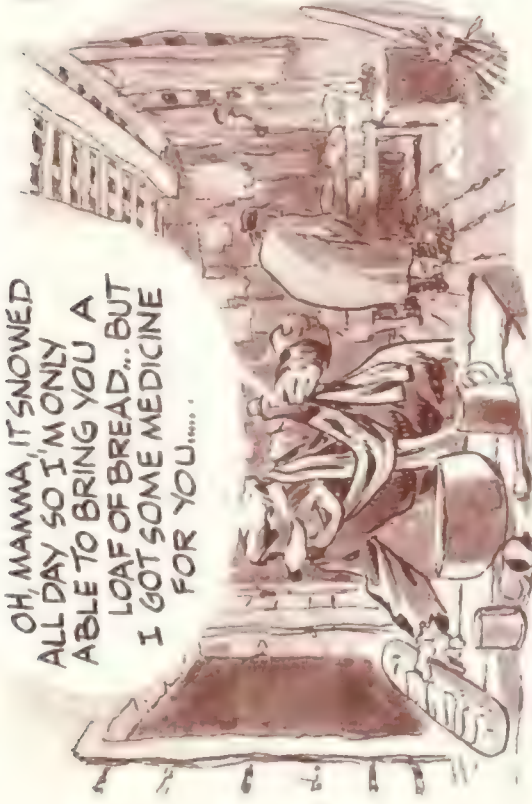
GO
AWAY,
JEW!



*My father's death left me
the sole support of my mother.
One day...*



OH, MAMMA, IT SNOWED
ALL DAY SO I'M ONLY
ABLE TO BRING YOU A
LOAF OF BREAD... BUT
I GOT SOME MEDICINE
FOR YOU....



RABBI COHEN?
WHY ARE YOU
HERE?!

ACH... MOSES,
YOUR MOTHER
HAS PASSED
AWAY.



MAMMA
MAMMA
MAMMA

OY! WHAT
ARE WE TO
DO WITH
YOU NOW,
MOSES
??

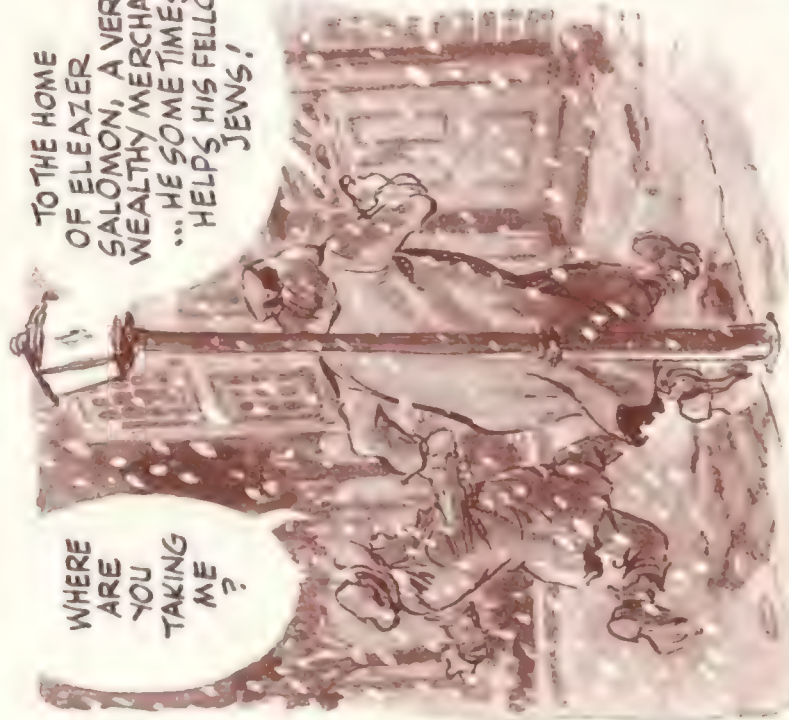


YOU ARE A GOOD
BOY... YOU SHOULD
NOT HAVE TO LIVE
ON THE STREET...
HMM THERE IS ONE
THING I CAN TRY
FOR YOU!



WHERE
ARE
YOU
TAKING
ME
?

TO THE HOME
OF ELEAZER
OF ELEAZER
SALOMON, A VERY
WEALTHY MERCHANT
... HE SOMETIMES
HELPS HIS FELLOW
JEWS!



GOOD NEWS,
MOSES! MISTER
SALOMON WILL TAKE
YOU IN AS A HOUSE-
BOY! YES, A
GREAT MITZVAH!



As a houseboy in the Salomon household I could accompany the master and see a very different side of Jewish life.



OH ANOTHER PLEA FROM SALOMON FOR HIS JEWISH RELIEF... THE ASHKENAZI FUND, Y'KNOW!

OH, MOTHER, IF YOU KEEP GIVING TO THEM... WE'LL NEVER BE... ER, 'ACCEPTED'!

DON'T BE A FOOL, ISABELLA! I'VE ARRANGED THINGS WITH THE DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND... YOU'LL 'MEET' LOCKHART GORDON! ... THE DUCHESS SEEKS SUITABLE MATCHES FOR YOUNG NOBLEMEN, YOU SEE, DEAR!

HE'S THE EARL OF ABOYNE! ... OH... HE WILL NEVER HAVE ME.

YES HE WILL! HE IS ONLY A THIRD SON... SO HE'LL NOT INHERIT THE FAMILY MONEY! YOU WILL COME WITH A £40,000 DOWRY... OH, YES... HE WILL!!

BUT, I... WE... I'M A JEW, I'LL NOT FIT IN!

YOU'LL BE BAPTIZED! YOU'LL MARRY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. ... I'LL SEE TO THAT!!

THEN MY CHILDREN WILL ALL BE... AHH, BAPTIZED TOO?



The reputation of the Jews in the London slums continued to soil the status of their betters. This only prodded Mr. Salomon and his colleagues into stronger efforts to build a fund for the school. Mr. Salomon, at last undeterred by Jewish class prejudices, called on Mr. Isaac D'Israeli, a leader in the Sephardic community.

BUT MR. D'ISRAELI,
YOU WILL BENEFIT
FROM UPLIFTING THE
JEWS OF LONDON!

I HAVE MY OWN
PROBLEMS NOW,
MR. SALOMON!

MY SYNAGOGUE
AND I ARE IN A BIG
DISAGREEMENT
OVER THE PRACTICE
OF THEIR RITUAL!!

JEWISH RITUAL
MUST INCLUDE THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
OR WE CAN NEVER
ASSIMILATE!

BUT
THERE'S
TRADITION,
Y'KNOW!

BAH!
THE SITUATION
IS INTOLERABLE
... I SHALL
RESIGN!

FURTHERMORE,
I WILL HAVE MY
CHILDREN
BAPTIZED!!


BUT, SIR,
WHAT EFFECT
MIGHT IT
HAVE ON YOUR
CHILDREN!?

VERY
LITTLE... AS A
GENTILE, MY SON,
BENJAMIN, COULD
ONE DAY BECOME
PRIME MINISTER!
...GOOD DAY
TO YOU!

HA HA HA HA
PRIME MINISTER
BENJAMIN D'ISRAELI?
... NOT VERY LIKELY!
EH, FAGIN, EH?


NOT
VERY!
...HE'LL BE
STILL BE
A JEW!

During the time I spent observing life in the Salomon household, I learned how Jews succeeded in rising in this world.




UNFORTUNATELY, MR. SALOMON, I'M UNABLE TO REPAY YOUR LOAN. MY LUCK AT THE TABLES HAS BEEN BAD, Y'SEE!

WELL, YOUR LORDSHIP... AHH... THERE MAY BE ANOTHER WAY TO MEET THE NOTE THAT I MIGHT FIND ACCEPTABLE.



...IF... FOR EXAMPLE, I ER... COULD SECURE A SEAT ON THE CITY COUNCIL FOR YOUTH EDUCATION...?

WELL... NOW... AHEM... YOUR RELIGION MAY BE A PROBLEM THERE M M M BUT I BELIEVE I CAN EXERT SOME INFLUENCE... ALL RIGHT SIR... YOU'LL HAVE AN APPOINTMENT!



PROVIDED YOU AHH WILL ADVANCE ME £1000 AGAINST MY FUTURE NEEDS AT THE TABLES!

OF COURSE!

MR. SALOMON, THAT WAS ER BRIBERY... WAS IT NOT?

IT WAS ENTERPRISE, FAGIN... HOW ELSE COULD A JEW GET SUCH AN APPOINTMENT EH? EH??

Mr. Salomon still pursued his search for funds to uplift the lower-class Jews of London by establishing a school to educate young Ashkenazim and help them advance by ways other than crime.



SIR, WHY ARE WE ALWAYS CALLING ON JEWS OF SUCH HIGH POSITION?

MY BOY, IT IS THE WEALTHY JEWS WHO SEEK ACCEPTANCE IN THIS SOCIETY BY UPLIFTING THE REPUTATION OF THEIR POOR... COME ALONG!

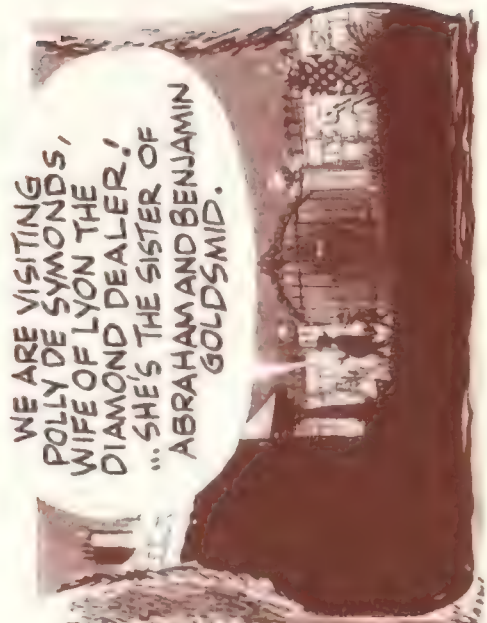


SIR, WHY ARE WE ALWAYS CALLING ON JEWS OF SUCH HIGH POSITION?

MY BOY, IT IS THE WEALTHY JEWS WHO SEEK ACCEPTANCE IN THIS SOCIETY BY UPLIFTING THE REPUTATION OF THEIR POOR... COME ALONG!

YOU MUST MEAN ASHKENAZIM... BUT WHO AMONG THEM HAVE RISEN UP??

THE GOLDSMIDS, MY BOY!



WE ARE VISITING POLLY DE SYMONDS, WIFE OF LYON THE DIAMOND DEALER! ... SHE'S THE SISTER OF ABRAHAM AND BENJAMIN GOLDSMID.



THEY ARE ASHKENAZIM ... THEY'RE FROM GERMANY AND HAVE PROSPERED HERE IN ENGLAND!



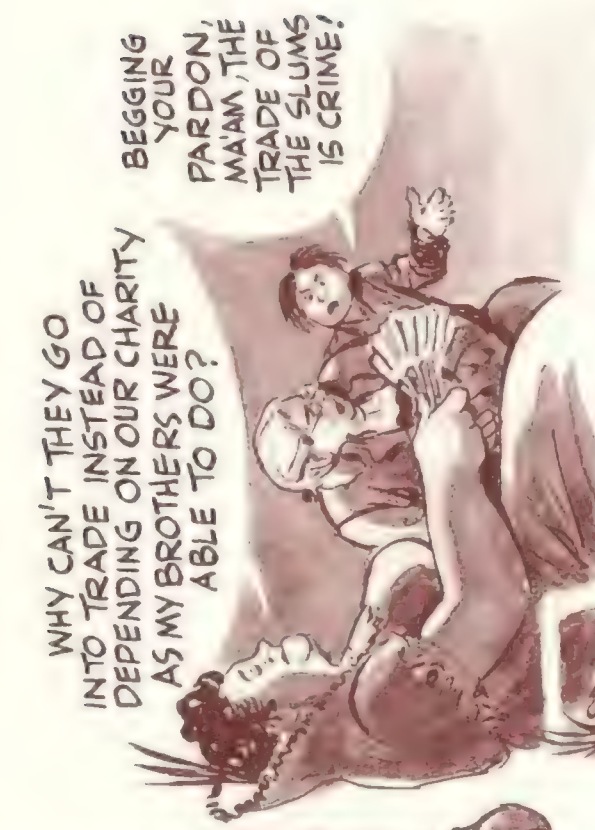
MR. SALOMON, YOU'RE TOO LATE! SURELY YOU MUST KNOW THAT MY BROTHERS ARE ANEW DEAD... AH SUICIDES!

I KNOW, I KNOW!

THE GOLDSMID BUSINESS COLLAPSED SINCE THEN, ... YOU SEE!

I KNOW THAT TOO... THAT IS EXACTLY WHY I CAME TO YOU, MADAM SYMONDS!





YOU HAVE A VERY SMART BOY THERE, SALOMON!

SHHH PLEASE, FAGIN, KEEP YOUR PLACE!!



OH... VERY WELL, WHEN YOU ARE READY TO OPEN THE SCHOOL YOU MAY COUNT ON MY SUPPORT ... GOOD DAY...

THANK YOU!



SIGH... SO, HOW CAN JEWS OVERCOME PLACE?

JEWS HAVE ENTERPRISE, GENTILES HAVE BIRTHRIGHT!



A MR. JOSEPH FREY
TO SEE YOU,
MR. SALOMON.

I KNOW OF YOU!
...YOU'RE THE BAPTIZED
JEW WHO HEADS THE
LONDON SOCIETY FOR
THE PROMOTION OF
CHRISTIANITY!!
...WHAT DO YOU
WANT OF ME??

WE ARE A CHARITY
FOR CHRISTIANIZING
JEWS...WE NEED YOUR
FINANCIAL HELP, SIR!

WHAT?
...I GIVE
MONEY
FOR THAT?
...NEVER!!

LISTEN...

WE JEWS ARE GOD'S
PEOPLE. WE PRESERVE
THE TRUTH CHRISTIANS
ENJOY! ACTUALLY,
YOUR SOCIETY SHOULD
SHOW GRATITUDE TO
US...INSTEAD OF
CONVERSION!

CUNNINGLY
REASONED! BUT
WE BRING YOU JEWS
MEMBERSHIP IN
ENGLISH SOCIETY!

JEWS MUST EMBRACE
CHRISTIANITY TO DO THIS!!
OUR SCHOOLS WILL TEACH
YOUR YOUTH CRAFTS AND
SKILLS WHILE THEY BECOME
CHRISTIANS, Y'SEE!

AHEM!

I
WOULD
LIKE TO
JOIN YOUR
SCHOOL,
MR. FREY!

FINE, FINE,
YOUNG MAN,
COME WITH
ME!

I'M
SORRY, MR.
SALOMON...
THIS MAY
BE MY CHANCE
TO RISE!

I UNDERSTAND!
...THERE WILL STILL
BE A PLACE HERE
FOR YOU WHEN YOU
REGRET THIS AND
COME BACK !!

One year later, Joseph Frey's school for the Christianizing of young Jews lay in failure. Mr. Frey was reprimanded and reassigned by his backers for an indiscreet affair with a Mrs. Josephson. All I had accumulated in my time there was some skill at sewing, basket weaving, and repair, which would be of use to me later in life. But Christianizing me had failed.

AHEM!
EXCUSE
ME...
MR.
SALOMON,

MOSES
FAGIN "... AHH,
WELL, WELL, WELL!
YOU HAVE
RETURNED
"... AS I
EXPECTED!!

NOW, YOUNG
MAN, HAVE YOU
DECIDED WHICH
IS A BETTER
RELIGION ??
JUDAISM OR
CHRISTIANITY?

WELL, SIR,
ALL FAITHS
ARE EQUAL
TO A WRETCH
IN NEED,
IT SEEMS
TO ME!

HA, HO... YOU
HAVE INDEED
MATURED, I SEE!
WELCOME
BACK,
MOSES FAGIN!



Well ... a few years passed and I was in my seventeenth year, still a servant in the Salomon house. Then one day ...

GENTLEMEN,
WE MUST FACE IT!
POVERTY AND CRIME
AMONG OUR
OWN ASHKENAZI
JEWS HAS BECOME
EMBARRASSING
TO US! "THE VERY
WORD 'JEW' IS
NOW A TERM FOR
A KNAVE, THIEF,
AND WORSE!!"
WHY, THIS YEAR
ALONE 37 JEWS
WERE HANGED
HERE IN
LONDON!

INDEED... IF WE
ARE EVER TO FIND
ACCEPTANCE HERE,
WE MUST DO
SOMETHING!

I HAVE, MYSELF,
APPLIED TO THE
BEST JEWISH FAMILIES
FOR HELP... AND WE
HAVE OPENED A
SCHOOL FOR POOR
JEWISH CHILDREN!

YES...
WE EVEN HAVE
THE SUPPORT OF
SEPHARDIM... LIKE
THE DACOSTAS
AND DISRAELIS...
FOR THE SCHOOL
TO TEACH READING
AND WRITING
IN ENGLISH,
ALONG WITH
TORAH!

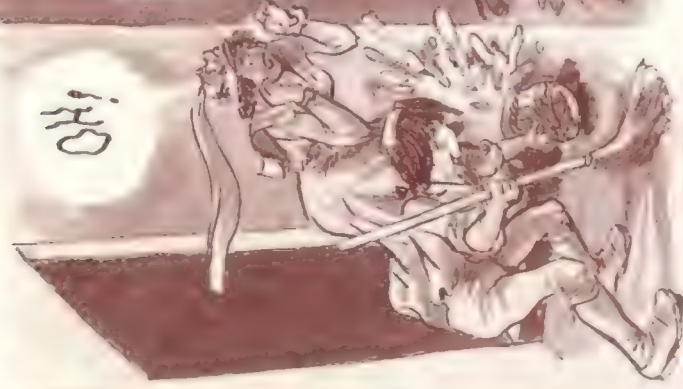
HAVE
WE
FOUND
A PLACE
YET?

YES! I'VE
RENTED AN
EMPTY HOUSE
OWNED BY
EMMANUEL
LOPEZ!

"... AND I
WILL DONATE
THE SERVICES
OF MY
HOUSEBOY,
MOSES
FAGIN,
TO CLEAN
IT!"



And so I went to work at the school...



YOU'RE
VERY
KIND.
...WHAT
IS YOUR
NAME
?

THERE
NOW
... IT'S
DRY
AS
NEW!

MOSES
FAGIN,
MA'AM,
...I CLEAN
HERE.

I'M
REBECCA
LOPEZ.
...MY
FATHER
OWNS
THIS
BUILDING!

OH, NOW,
YOU
MUSTN'T
BE SO
FRIGHTENED
OF ME,
AH! I THINK
I SHALL BE
VISIT HERE
MORE OFTEN,
MOSES!



So began my short romance with Rebecca Lopez.

HELLO
AGAIN,
MOSES
FAGIN!
HEE
HEE

OH, MISS
LOPEZ
WE MUST BE
CAREFUL!

WHY? DON'T
YOU LIKE ME?

OH, I DO
I DO!
BUT I
MUST
KEEP
MY
PLACE.

OH...SILLY,
...HERE,
THIS IS
TO ASSURE
YOU!

KNAVE

MISTER
LOPEZ?

FATHER!

UNHAND
MY DAUGHTER,
VILLAIN!
...BUT
SIR

FATHER,
PLEASE!

GET OUT
OF HERE!
DO NOT EVER
RETURN!

So it ended ... as did my place in the school, and with it all hope for improvement in my station. With this turn of events began my return to the dregs of the streets of London.

AHA! HERE WE
HAVE A BOY IN
SEARCH OF WORK!
"YES...WE HAVE!
...WE HAVE!"

"...STRONG
AND HONEST,
FROM THE
LOOK OF HIM!"

LISTEN, BOY,
WE TRADE IN
OLD CLOTHES,
"...GOOD MONEY
IN IT,"

YES, NO
COMPETITION
FROM
GENTILES.
NONE!!

NOW, HERE'S A
LITTLE MONEY!
GO IN THE STREET
"...CALL OUT...
"I BUY
OLD CLOTHES."

YOU'D
TRUST
ME WITH
YOUR
MONEY
?

IT'S A
LOAN, BOY!
"...IF YOU'RE
NOT BACK
HERE BY
SUNDOWN
WITH MONEY
OR CLOTHES
...WE
WILL
FIND
YOU!"

♪ I BUY
OLD CLOTHES
♪

HA HA
HA!

HEY! YER
WASTIN' YER
TIME...I CAN
SHOW YER A
BETTER WAY!
"...YOU NEED
A PARTNER,
...ME!"

I HAVE
ONLY
TILL
NIGHT-
FALL!

AH, YES...I
DEARIE...I
BRING YER A
CHANCE TO
EARN AN
EASY
SHILLING!

SHE
STOLE
HER
MASTER'S
CLOTHES
AND SOLD
THEM
TO US!

SO
SHE
DID!

Ah, how the business of survival does take perilous turns. Before long, I was more deeply involved in the trade of the streets than ever.





GET IN HERE AND
SHUT UP!

THERE'S
PEOPLE
UPSTAIRS!



STAND NEAR THE
DOOR AND KEEP AN
EYE OPEN, BOY!



I HEAR
SOMEONE
COMING
DOWN!



THIEVES!



H-HE'S
DEAD!

GET THE
REST OF THE
SILVER!

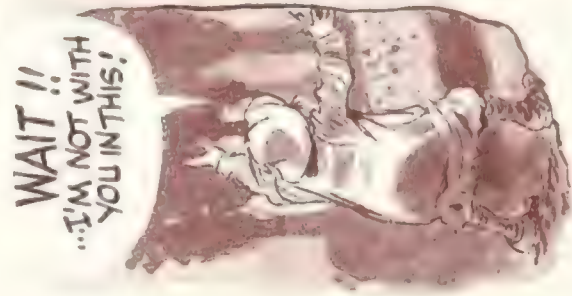
LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE!



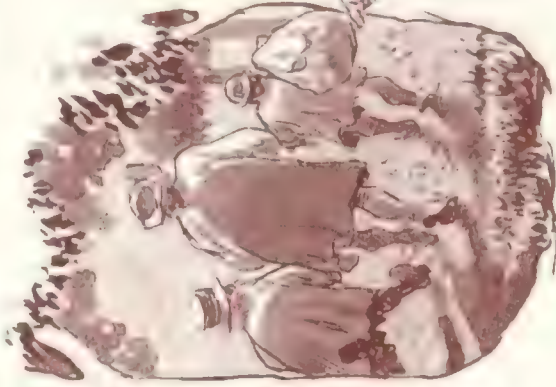


I WARNED YOU!!
I WARNED YOU!!

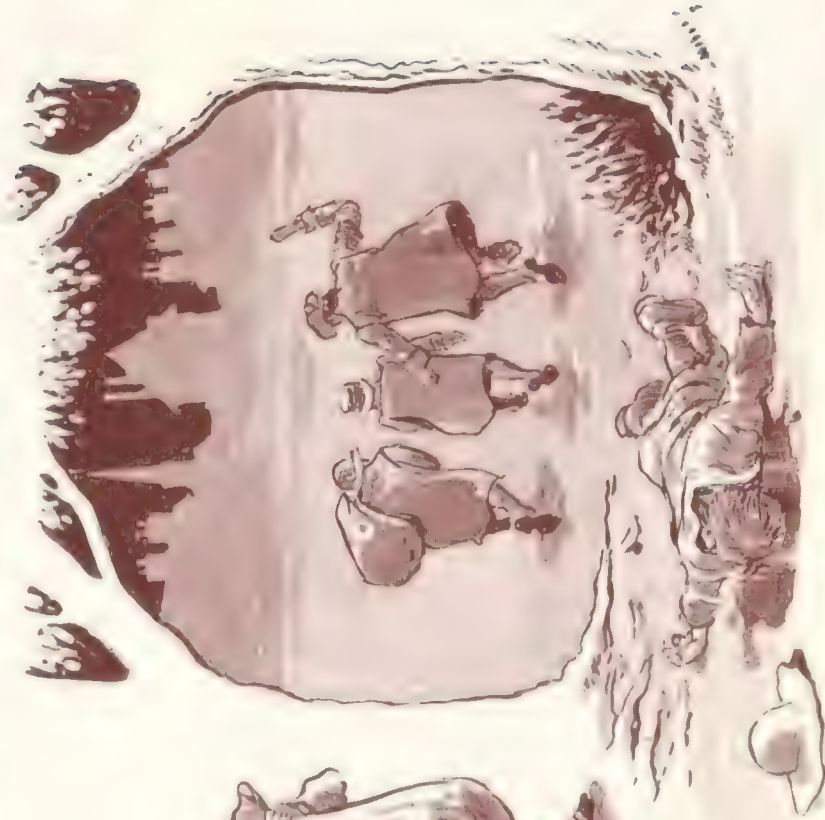
HURRY! SHUT
THAT BOY UP!!



WAIT !!
...I'M NOT WITH
YOU IN THIS!



...YOU
KILLED
HIM!



AHA...A TIDY
LOT...WHERE
DID YOU COME
BY ALL THIS?

"NONE OF
YER BUSINESS!

A FINE COLLECTION
OF SILVER HERE!

"AYE, JEW.
WORTH AT
LEAST 50
POUNDS,
EH, EH?

TEN
POUNDS,
...NOT A
FARTHING
MORE!

NO!
IT WAS
HARD
COME
BY!

SHH...
BETTER
TAKE
IT?

AYE,
WE
HAVE
NO
TIME TO
BARGAIN,
PAY
US!

HERE'S YOUR
MONEY, THEN!

OH, WHERE'S
MY YOUNG
PARTNER
YOU TOOK
WITH YOU?

HE...ER...HE
RAN AWAY!

AY WE
NEVER
SAW THE
LAD
AGAIN!

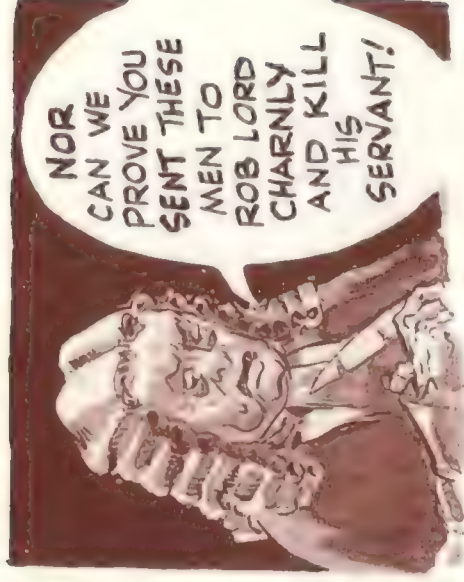
YES,
NEVER,
NEVER!

By now I had learned that in this trade, it was best not to ask questions. So I stored my newly purchased treasures in a safe place. They would bring me a tidy profit. I could sleep well ...





WHILE I CAN SEE WHERE
THE DEATH OF YOUR YOUNG
PARTNER WOULD INCREASE
YOUR SHARE OF THE PROFITS,
...THERE IS NO EVIDENCE
TO CONNECT YOU WITH
HIS MURDER.



NOR
CAN WE
PROVE YOU
SENT THESE
MEN TO
ROB LORD
CHARNLY
AND KILL
HIS
SERVANT!



BUT,
WE DO
HAVE THE
SIGNED
CONFESSION
OF THESE
MEN THAT
YOU DID
AGREE
TO BUY
THEIR
LOOT!

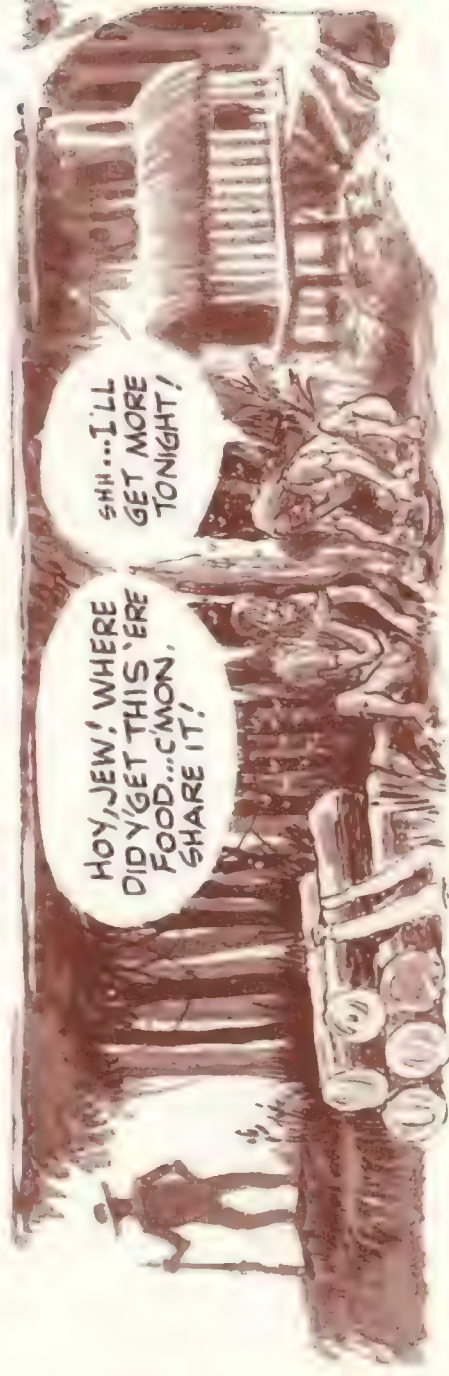
THEREFORE, MOSES FAGIN, FOR
THE CRIME OF RECEIVING STOLEN
GOODS AND SUSPICION OF YOUR
COMPLIANCE IN A MURDER... YOU
ARE HEREBY SENTENCED TO
TRANSPORTATION FOR
TEN YEARS!



It was the very next week that I was herded with other convicts on a ship bound for one of England's western colonies, where convicts sentenced to transportation were to fulfill their sentences. There they were enslaved to colonists who bought their services from the Crown.



In the penal colony I was "bought" by a plantation owner, and for a year I was part of a gang clearing a swamp. There was little to eat and hard work from dawn to dusk ... but I knew how to find food.



HOY, JEW! WHERE DID Y'GET THIS 'ERE FOOD...C'MON, SHARE IT!

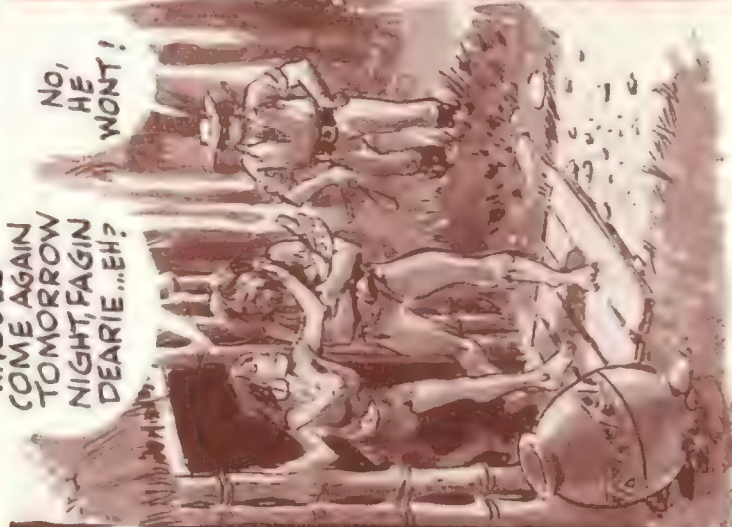
SHH...I'LL GET MORE TONIGHT!



HAVE ENOUGH? WAIT...COME HERE TO ME... DEARIE!



I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...LAYIN' OUT FOOD EACH NIGHT! AH, COME ON NOW! AH, THEY SAY JEWS DO IT BETTER BECAUSE THEY'RE CIRCUMCISED!

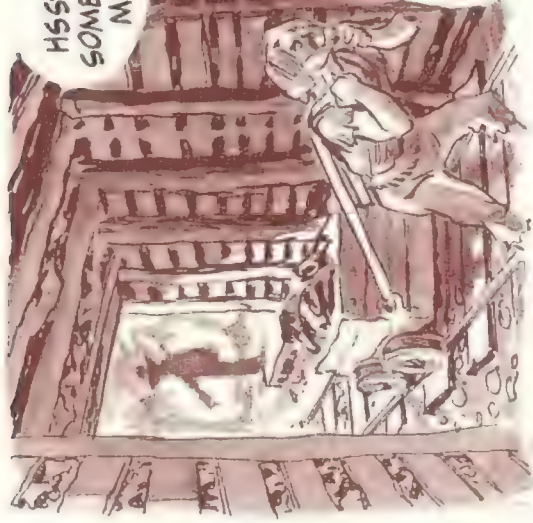


...YOU'LL COME AGAIN TOMORROW NIGHT, FAGIN DEARIE...EH?

NO, HE WONT!



IT'S OFF TO THE MINES FOR YER NOW, JEW!



HSST! Y'GOT
SOMETHING FOR
ME...JEW?

YES... MEET
ME AT THE
ENTRANCE
TONIGHT!



HERE, HARRY...
NOW, IF YOU'LL PUT
ME ON AN EASIER
JOB... I'LL GET
YOU MORE !!

SURE,
SURE!
AHHH THIS
IS QUITE A
BEAUTY!



HAVE YOU
SEEN HARD HARRY
THE MINE GUARD?
...SUDDENLY HE'S
RICH AND FANCIES
OUR WOMEN!

AND
NOT
SHY
ABOUT
IT!



THERE HE GOES
WITH ONE OF
OUR GIRLS...
TH' BASTARD!

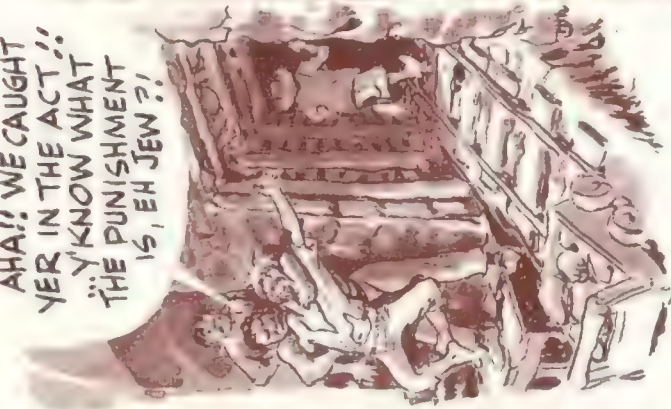


WHERE
DOES
HE GET
THEM
OPALS
?

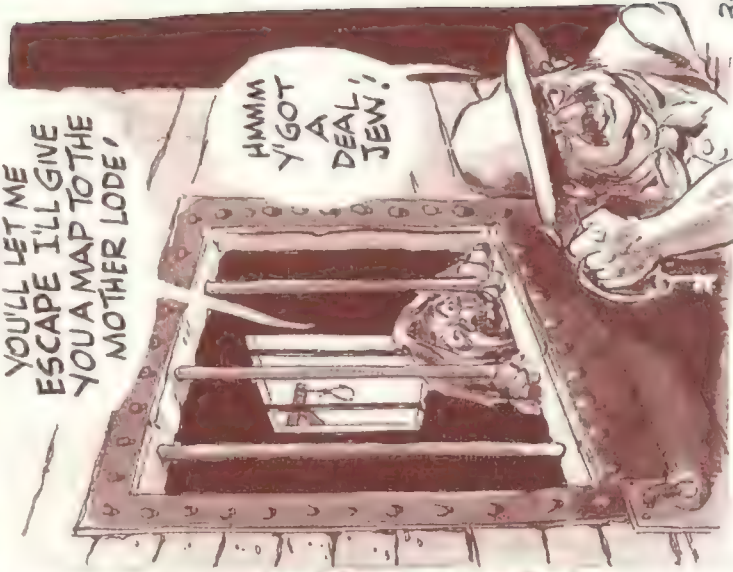
HAS TO BE
FROM SOME
ONE INSIDE
THE MINE!
LET'S
LOOK INTO
THIS!



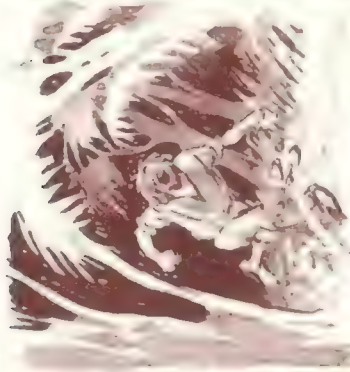
AHA!! WE CAUGHT
YER IN THE ACT!!
...Y'KNOW WHAT
THE PUNISHMENT
IS, EH JEW?!



LISTEN... IF
YOU'LL LET ME
ESCAPE I'LL GIVE
YOU A MAP TO THE
MOTHER LODGE



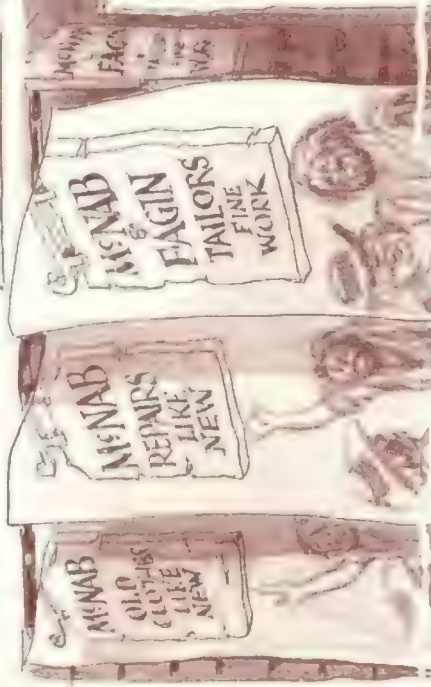
HAHAHA
Y'GOT
A
DEAL!
JEW!



*That night I
escaped to the
port.*



'S 'CUSE ME, SIR! I CAN
MAKE MORE MONEY F'R
YOU REPAIRING 'STEAD
OF SELLING.



McNAB
REPAIRS
LIKE
NEW

McNAB
FAGIN
TAILORS
FINE
WORK



HOY, MCNAB... OL' MATE!
Y'R BEEN DOIN' WELL... BUT HOW
HONEST IS Y'R PARTNER?
WHEN'S THE LAST TIME
Y'CHECKED Y' CASH
BOX, EH?

MMM I'LL
HAVE A
LOOK,
GILLEY.

*Before long I improved my
position and the shop's trade.*

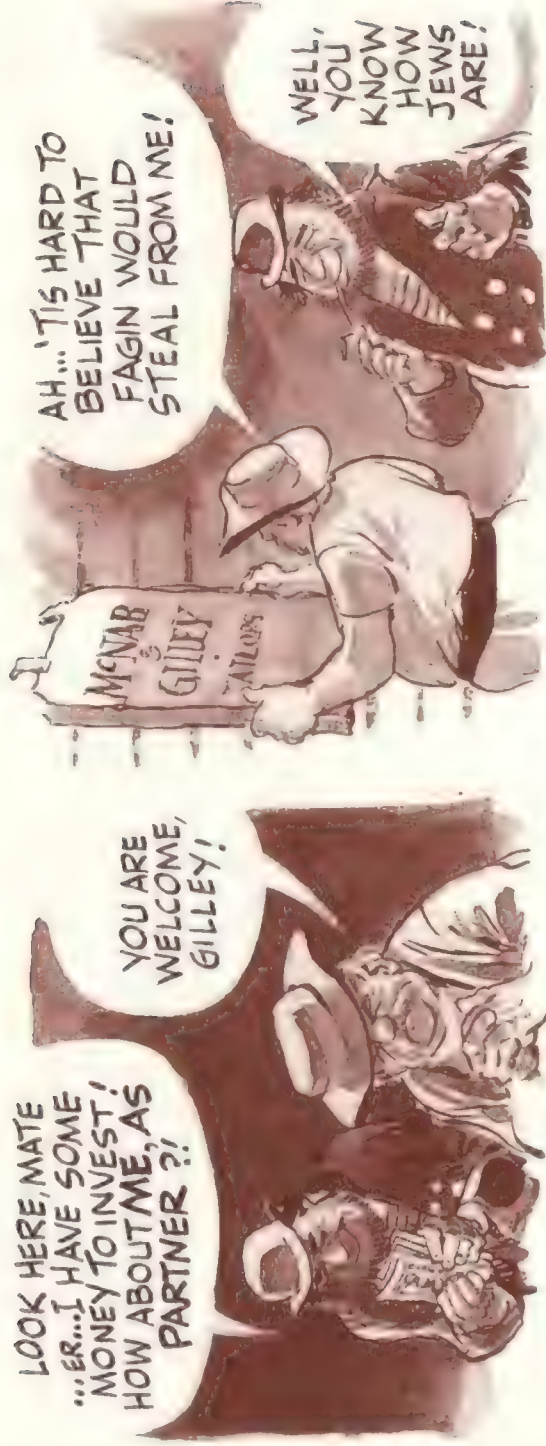


FAGIN,
OUR CASH
BOX IS
EMPTY!

Y' DIRTY
THIEVIN'
JEW!
I
TELL YOU,
MCNAB,
I DIDN'T...



GET
OUT!



Once again I was at liberty, actually a prisoner-at-large. To avoid arrest I kept to the docks hoping for any opportunity that would give me shelter.





WHAT'S
YOUR NAME?

FAGIN
SIR... JUST
FAGIN!

YER A CONVICT I'LL WAGER!
AND Y'BEEN OUT HERE LONG BY
THE LOOK OF YER... BUT NOT TO
WORRY... Y'LL BE VERY SAFE
WORKIN' AT DAWSON EXPORT!
... I'M JACK DAWSON!

OH,
THANK
YOU,
SIR!

Mr. Dawson was a good man, fair and kind, and he provided me with a safe haven. Meanwhile, my anger over the betrayal at McNab kept boiling inside me, and before long I devised a plan to avenge myself.



I THINK I'LL
WEAR ME DRESS
COAT TO TH' TRADER'S
DINNER TONIGHT!
EH? EH?

YES,
SIR!

IT'S GONE!
MY DRESS
COAT IS NOT
HERE, FAGIN!

STRANGE... I SAW
ONE LIKE IT HANGING
AT MCNAB'S SHOP!!
AH... I TOLD YOU HOW
THEY GET THE
CLOTHES THEY SELL!





EASY NOW, MR. DAWSON!
...REMEMBER...YOU'VE
BEEN SICK, SIR...

I'M
ONLY GOING
DOWN TO
MCKNAB'S
SHOP TO
SEE FOR
MYSELF!

THAT'S MY
DRESS COAT
MCKNAB...GOT
YOU WITH THE
EVIDENCE!

NO, NO, NO,
DAWSON!
I DON'T
KNOW HOW
IT GOT
HERE!

YOU STOLE IT, MCKNAB!
I KNOW HOW YOU "ACQUIRE"
CLOTHES TO REFURBISH AND
SELL!...I'M GOING TO BRING
CHARGES AGAINST YOU
AND DRIVE Y'OUT
OF BUSINESS!!



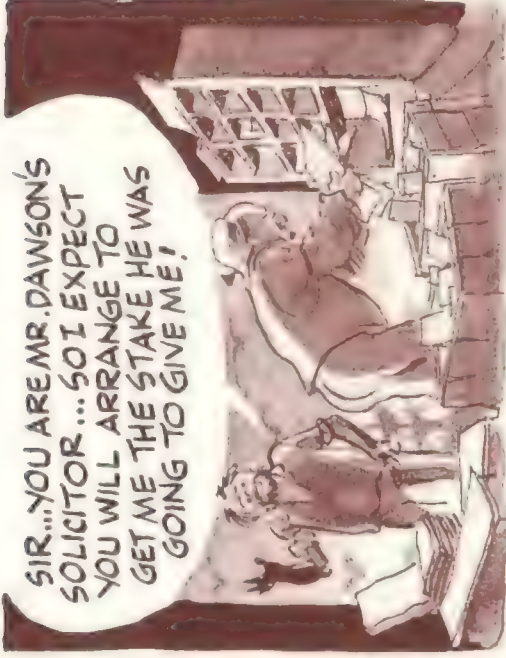
My plan worked perfectly ... now at last I had a chance to establish myself. It was possible for convicts to do this if they had someone to "stake" them.



"THANK YOU FOR AGREEING
YESTERDAY TO STAKE ME SO
I CAN BUY MCKNAB'S SHOP, MR.
DAWSON!...I WON'T BE SORRY.
I KNOW THE TRADE...I'LL
SOON PAY YOU BACK!"



MISTER
DAWSON?



So I remained there, working out the rest of my sentence, a slave indentured to an honest harbor master, until one day ...



And so it was within the month I returned to the world I really understood ... London.



When at last I returned to London, I was aged beyond my years. Broken in body, in fragile health, I was in appearance a shuffling greybeard, the result of the horrors of penal life and imprisonment.



However, I still had my wits about me. Sharper than ever were my skills, which were honed in the penal colonies.

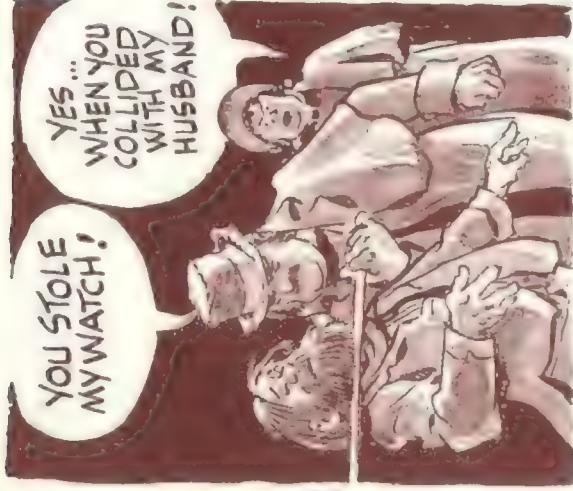


WAIT!



YOU STOLE
MY WATCH!

YES...
WHEN YOU
COLLIDED
WITH MY
HUSBAND!



OH NO, MA'AM,
IT MUST HAVE
FALLEN OUT
OF HIS POCKET
WHEN WE...
AH SIR,
THERE
IT IS!



OH,
WE'RE
SO
SORRY.

NO APOLOGY
NEEDED. ER, AH,
A SHILLING FOR
MY TROUBLE,
PERHAPS!



COME ON, REBECCA,
LET'S GO! WHY ARE
YOU STARING AT
HIM SO??



"THAT MAN!"
HE REMINDS ME
OF SOMEONE
I ONCE
KNEW!

WHAT,
THAT
OLD
MAN?
HMPF

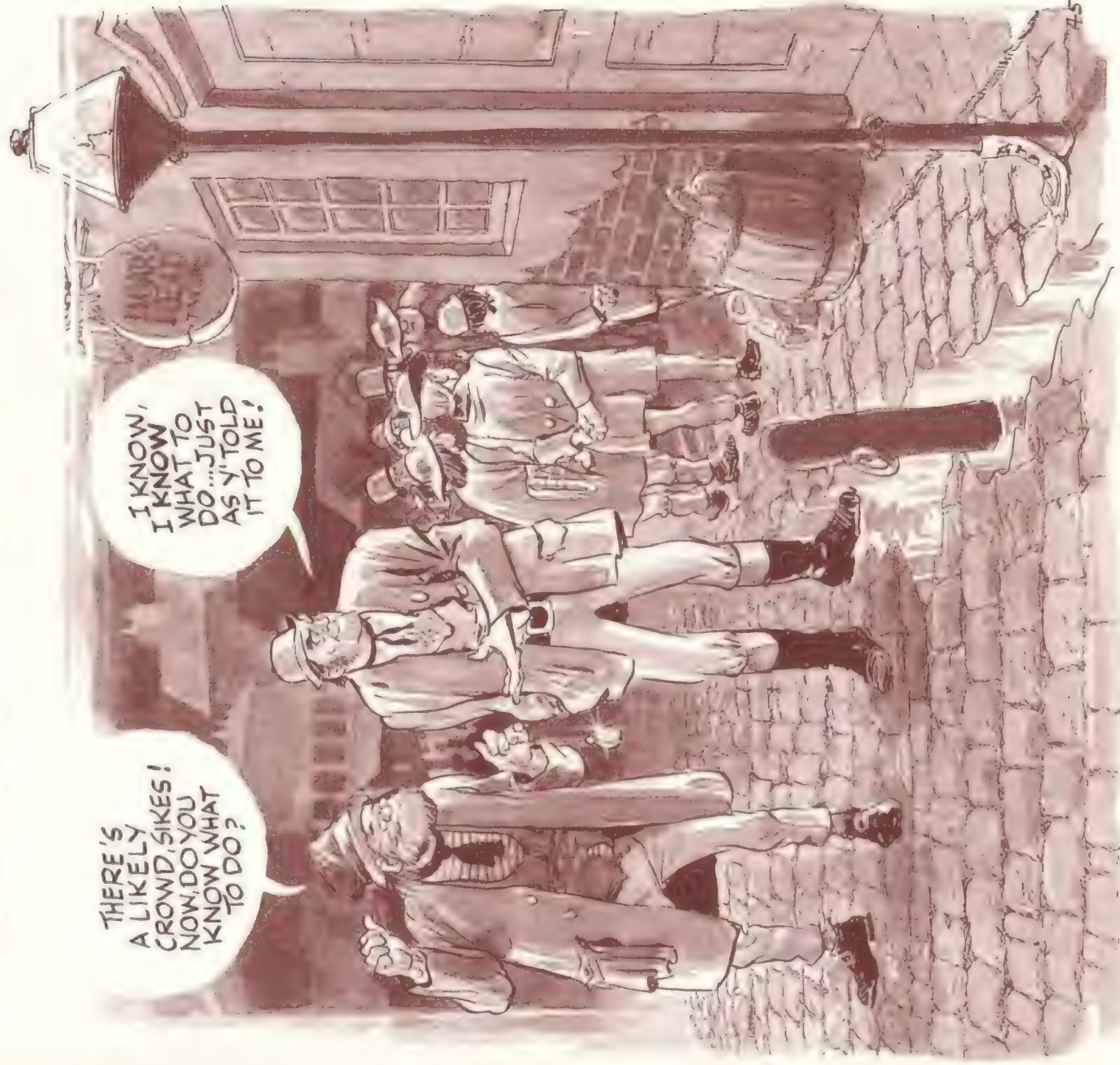
WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I
FELL IN LOVE WITH A YOUNG
CARETAKER IN OUR SCHOOL!
"ONE DAY MY FATHER CAUGHT
US KISSING AND THREW THE
BOY OUT... I NEVER SAW
HIM AGAIN!

WELL,
HA HA HA,
THAT
COULD
HARDLY
BE
HIM!



In London, I had finally established myself. I was no longer naïve; gone was the promise that fueled my hope of a grand future. I was what the urchins who worked for me would one day become.

Who knows, were I not a Jew ... had I not lost opportunities or suffered the misfortune of imprisonment or had I been able to stay in Mr. Salomon's employ, I might not be standing in a knot of people in a London street operating a street game with a new partner, a ruffian named Sikes.



WHO WILL BUY
MY GOLDWATCH?
...ONLY £10!

IT WAS MY FATHER'S...
NOW IT'S ALL I HAVE
LEFT FROM HIS GOODLY
INHERITANCE TO BUY
FOOD FOR MY DEAR
CHILDREN!

I WILL
BUY IT!
I'LL BUY!

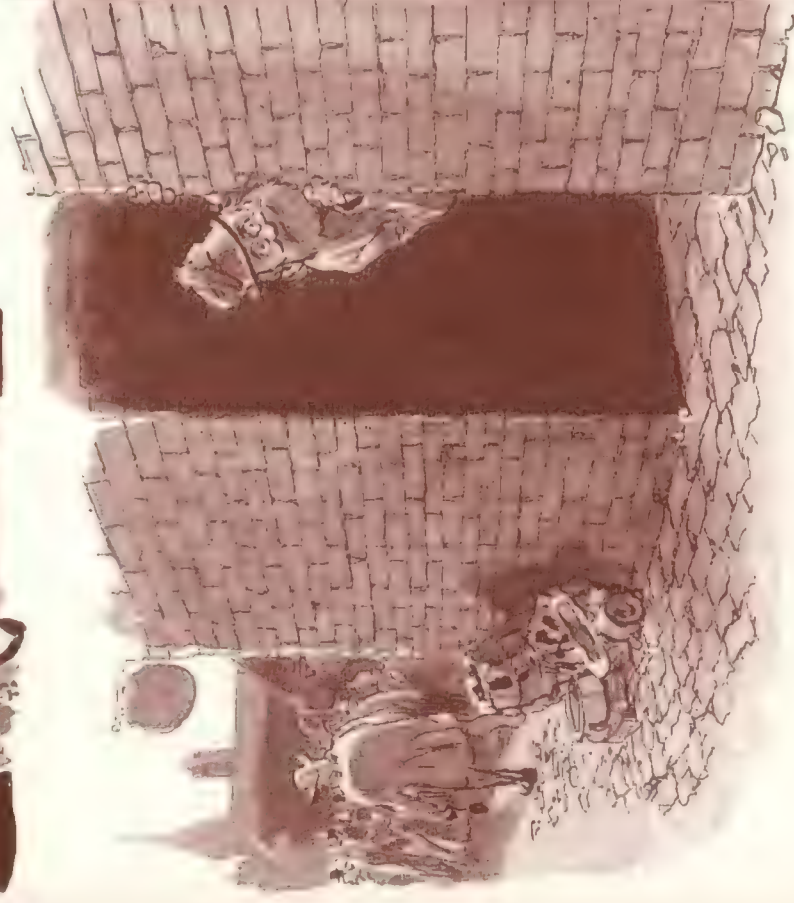
NO SIR... NEVER!
I DO NOT TRADE
WITH JEWS...
NO, SIR!

SURE,
I'LL
BUY
IT FOR
YOU!

DRAT !!
THAT WATCH
IS SOLID GOLD
AND WORTH THRICE
WHAT HE ASKS! OH.
SIR, EXCUSE ME...
IF YOU WOULD BUY
IT INSTEAD... I'LL
GIVE YOU BACK YOUR
£10... PLUS A VERY
GOOD COMMISSION
FOR YOUR
TROUBLE!

BLESS
YOU, SIR!
...PROUD
TO FIND
AN HONEST
CHRISTIAN!

I'LL BUY
YOUR
WATCH!
...HERE!





AHA!



"... YOU WASN'T
THINKIN' OF AH,
GOING OFF AND
NOT SHARING
THE MONEY WITH
ME... NOW, WUZ
YOU??"

OH NO,
FAGIN! WE'S
PARTNERS
"... AIN'T WE.
"... EH??



SIKES!



ACH... FAGIN,
I AIN'T GOT
PATIENCE FOR
SUCH SCHEMES!
"... I COULD'A
BRAINED HIM
AND TOOK
HIS MONEY
EASY!

NOW, SIKES,
Y'KNOW THAT
AIN'T MY STYLE!
I HAVE NAUGHT
TO DO WITH
VIOLENCE!

HAW! AIN'T THAT
JUST LIKE A JEW?!
... LISTEN, FAGIN, HERE'S
SOME NEW LOOT YOU
CAN BUY FROM ME!
"... IT'S QUALITY!!

HMM...
LET ME
SEE IT!



WHERE DID YOU
GET THESE, SIKES?

NOT YER BUSINESS..!
OH WELL, I ROBBED OL'
ELEAZER SALOMON'S
HOUSE! HE DIED AND
HIS FAMILY WAS JUST
SITTING IN MOURNING!
... IT WAS EASY!

ELEAZER
SALOMON
?!

C'MON NOW!
PAY ME, OR
I'LL...

NOW DON'T GIVE ME
NO SERMON ON A
KINDNESS! I KNOW YOU
JEWS STICK TOGETHER!
... THIS IS QUALITY
STUFF... HE WAS A
RICH MAN!

IT'S GOOD
STUFF I
BRUNG YER,
FAGIN!

GET
OUT
OF
HERE,
SIKES!

I returned the loot to Mr. Salomon's home, where for a few moments I mourned over what my life ... what I might have been, had Mr. Lopez not thrown me out of that school so many years ago.



The following years were spent at the only trade I knew ... buying and selling whatever came to hand. I became a haven for the ragged urchins of the street.



And my reputation among the little derelicts soon spread. I became known as a teacher of street arts ...



Soon my dwelling, such as it was, filled with adept ragamuffins who provided me with an ample source of merchandise I could resell.



*I bought and sold what I could from
whatever my boys brought me.
Ah, but they required a bit of discipline.*

WAIT A
MOMENT,
BOY!



WHERE'S
THE
REST
OF IT...
EH? EH?
EH?



AHA...
THERE
IT IS
NOW!



NO ONE HOLDS
OUT ON OL' FAGIN,
MY DEAR BOY!

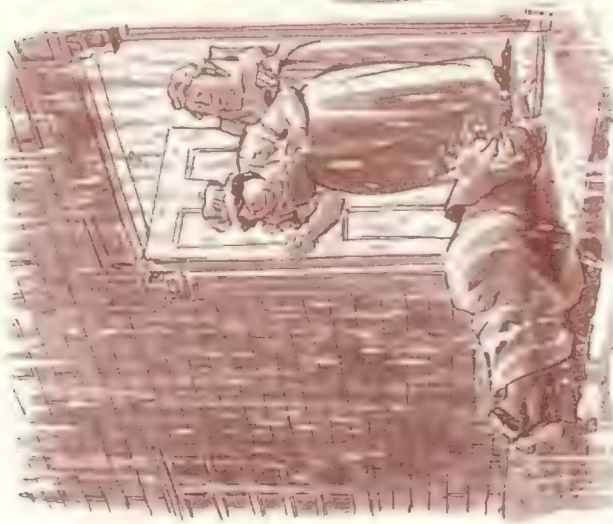


*So the years went by. I never did prosper,
nor was I able to advance beyond the
grimy life on the streets of London. Still,
I kept myself and my boys from the bitter
refuge of workhouses.*

It was in one of these houses of questionable charity that fate delivered a young companion for me in the last chapter of my life. He joined my "family" as usual, recruited by one of my steady boys. Years later, I learned of his origin from young Claypole, who was once employed with him at Sowerberry's. The rest came from hearsay and deduction. The boy was born out of grim circumstances not unusual for our society.

It was ten years ago. Late one evening a young woman appeared at the doorstep of one of these poorly maintained workhouses.





HURRY,
HURRY,
HURRY!

HERE
'TIS!

...LET'S GET
THE POOR THING
INSIDE!

OH MY
GOD!! SHE'S
HAVING
A BABY!!
...WE MUST
SEE TO
HER!

THERE, NOW!
...IT'S A FINE
STURDY BOY
SHE HAS!

...BUT THE
POOR GIRL
LOOKS
SO WAN!



FETCH THE
BEADLE!...HE'LL
WANT TO KNOW
ABOUT THIS!

OH, MISTER
BUMBLE, MISTER
BUMBLE...WE HAVE
SOMETHING HERE
Y'LL WANT TO
SEE! CAN YOU
COME NOW,
PLEASE!





AHA... A NEW BOY!
'E'S A STURDY ONE,
'E SEEMS... EH?

OH, MISTER
BUMBLE, THE
MOTHER IS
DEAD, SIR!



WELL NOW,
SHE LEAVES
NO MONEY!
SO WE'LL
JES' BURY HER,
TELL NO ONE,
AND KEEP
THE LAD!

OUGHT WE NOT
TRY TO FIND OUT
WHO THE MOTHER
IS ER WAS?



DON'T WASTE OUR
TIME! I AM THE
BEADLE HERE!
DO AS I SAY!

... AND WHAT
'AVE WE HERE?
... HMMMMM
LET'S 'AVE A
LOOK-SEE!

OH, HO... YES, YES!
A FINE OLD GOLD
LOCKET! ACH... YE'LL
HAVE NO NEED FOR
IT NOW, DEARIE.
WILL YER?

SO, I'LL JUST
KEEP THIS
FOR MYSELF!
...EH, MISS?

OH MISTER
BUMBLE, HELL
BE NEEDING A
NAME, WON'T
HE, SIR?

AH, YES, YES... MY
DUTY TO DO IT, EH?
YES, INDEED... BUT
THERE'S NAUGHT
TO GO ON... IS
THERE?

LET ME SEE NOW.
...THE LAST BOY
WHO CAME TO US
WAS OSCAR TUTTLE
...SO WE ARE
UP TO 'T...Y'SEE.

HMM...
NOW LET
ME THINK,
NOW... 'T...
'T... 'T...

I HAVE IT...
TWIST! YES,
TWIST!!!
OLIVER
TWIST!

OLIVER
TWIST!
A FITTING
NAME FOR
A MYSTERY
BOY.
SIR!

Growing up in a workhouse, as you may have heard, is not easy. In these places, largesse or charity is doled out with a cruel economy by the people who operate them, for they seek to profit from the money they receive out of its management. Oh, I know well enough what Oliver's life was like there, and what he had to endure.



THIS ISN'T
ENOUGH...
WE NEED
MORE!

SHH

SHH

SSST
YOU TELL
HER FOR US
OLIVER!
..YOU SPEAK
SO WELL!

PLEASE,
MA'AM,
ER...
MORE?

WHAT?

NO ONE HAS
EVER DARED TO
ASK FOR MORE!!
HERE MR. BUMBLE,
TAKE HIM!

OH, MY!
OH, MY!
I SHALL
HAVE TO BRING
THIS UP BEFORE
THE BOARD
OF TRUSTEES!
..WE MUST
REPORT IT
ATONCE!

HE DID
WHAT?

EH?
EH?
EH?

MORE,
WAS
IT?

YES...AS
I TOLD YOU!
... HE ASKED
FOR MORE!

A VERY
SERIOUS
BREACH OF
DISCIPLINE!

YES!
VERY VERY
SERIOUS!

WE'LL
HAVE TO
DECIDE
WHAT TO
DO ABOUT
HIM!

MEANWHILE,
OLIVER,
YOU WILL
COME
WITH ME!

HERE YOU'LL STAY
THE NIGHT... TOMORROW
THE BOARD WILL
DECIDE ABOUT
YOU, BOY!!

The next day the trustees met again. It was their duty as custodians of this charitable institution to sit in judgment on all matters of discipline.



So Mr. Bumble undertook this task of finding a suitable apprenticeship for Oliver.





As my boys who have also experienced employment in similar circumstances tell me, finding a place here is always a challenge.



A rise in position in such a place is a splendid opportunity, as I can tell you.





STOP! STOP!
Y' LITTLE TERRIER!
LET GO OF POOR
CLAYPOLE
I SAY!!



AW!
HE HIT
ME FER
NAUGHT!
NO REASON,
SIR!

WELL, OLNER,
YOU CAN JUST
LIVE IN THE
CELLAR FROM
NOW ON!!



That night Oliver decided he must escape at last.



And he walked to the center of London, for want of a better place to go.



So began my relationship with a child of destiny, as they say...and with it the circumstances that defined my own encounter with fate. My affairs were taking a troubling turn and I had a meeting with my best boy, Jack Dawkins.



NOW JACK ...BUSINESS
HAS BEEN LAGGING HERE!
...WE LOST SOME OF OUR
BETTER BOYS TO SICKNESS
AND A^{HEM} THE LAW...YOU
MUST GET ABOUT FINDING
US NEW RECRUITS!

AW,
FAGIN...
Y'CAN COUNT
ON JACK
DAWKINS!
...I NEVER
FAILS
YER!

*And as fate would have it, that was the very day
young Oliver arrived in London.*





AWAY, BOY... I
DON'T NEED YOU!!
... AWAY, AWAY!

'ERE NOW,
FRIEND...UP
WITH YOU...YER
IN LUCK I'M
HERE!

OH THANK
YOU, JACK!
THANK
YOU!



JACK DAWKINS
...THAT'S ME! YER
HUNGRY?... I'LL
FETCH YA SOME
EATS!

AHHA, I SPY A
LIKELY ONE... SMH
STEP ASIDE!



**FIRE!
FIRE!**
AROUND
THE
CORNER!

WHERE?
WHERE?

HERE'S
YER EATS,
BOY!

OH...THANK
YOU, JACK!

MYNAME
IS OLIVER...
OLIVER
TWIST!

AHH...Y'CAN
JUST CALL ME
ARTFUL DODGER!
...GOT USE FOR
YER!

COME
ALONG
NOW,
OLIVER!

WHERE
ARE WE
GOING,
DODGER?

TO
FAGIN'S
HOUSE!

*Ah, well do I remember him ... clearly a lad of quality
... rare indeed in those days, I can assure you.*





Well, Oliver was recruited ... oh yes! In just a week he was working the street with the Artful Dodger.



STOP, THIEF!!





GOT
YER!

SIR... COME
WITH US TO THE
MAGISTRATE...
YOU'LL CHARGE
HIM THERE!



YES... BUT, IS
IT NECESSARY
TO BE SO
ROUGH?



YOUR HONOR,
THIS BOY HAS
FAINTED... HE
NEEDS MEDICAL
ATTENTION NOW!
...HE'S ILL, CAN'T
YOU SEE?

BAH! MR. BROWNLOW,
I HAVE DOZENS OF THESE
CASES EVERY DAY, I'M GETTING
IMPATIENT WITH HIS TYPE!

FAINTING
IS AN OLD
TRICK!

SIX MONTHS
IN NEWGATE
IS WHAT HE
NEEDS!



HE WAS
CAUGHT IN THE
ACT OF ROBBING
YOU, BROWNLOW
...WHY ARE YOU
DEFENDING
HIM, SIR?

THE POOR
LAD DOES NOT
APPEAR TO BE
A THIEF, YOUR
HONOR!

WAIT, WAIT...
I SEEN IT... THAT
BOY WAS PUSHED
ONTO THAT MAN...
BY A RUFFIAN!

?!:

WELL NOW, BASED
ON THE TESTIMONY
OF THIS WITNESS...
I DECLARE THIS BOY
INNOCENT, I RELEASE
HIM TO YOUR CARE,
MR. BROWNLOW!

THANK YOU!
"I WILL BRING
HIM HOME AND
TO THE GENTLE
CARE OF MY
WIFE."

HERE, MY DEAR,
I'VE BROUGHT HOME
THIS POOR WAIF!
"...WE MUST CARE
FOR HIM!"

THERE NOW!
WHOEVER YOU
ARE...WE SHALL
GET YOU WELL
AGAIN SOON!

HMM
YES...YES
THERE IS
SOMETHING
OF QUALITY
ABOUT THIS
LAD...WE MUST
LOOK AFTER
HIM!

Oliver was out of our hands. I knew not where until later, when I found out he was at the Brownlows, quite safe. Then my partner, Sikes, returned. He was always in fear of betrayal.



WHAT IS GOING
ON HERE??
EH, FAGIN!

UH...OH...HELLO
SIKES...OUR NEW
BOY, OLIVER, GOT
CAUGHT BY THE
POLICE!!

WHO
PEACHED
?!



THESE BOYS
OF YOURS LET THAT
TYKE OLIVER GET
CAUGHT, DID THEY?
WELL I'LL...

EASY, SIKES...
IT WASN'T NONE
OF THEM! OLIVER
GOT CAUGHT
LIFTIN' A PURSE!

THEN...IF THE
POLICE GOT HIM
...AND HE PEACHES
...BY GOD IT'LL
MEAN TROUBLE
FOR ME...
BIG TROUBLE!

I SHARE
YOUR
CONCERN,
SIKES!

IF OLIVER
PEACHES
ON US...IT'LL
BE MY NECK
TOO! WE'RE
PARTNERS,
REMEMBER!



BUT, HE'S QUALITY!
SO... IF HE'LL KEEP
HIS MOUTH SHUT THERE
IS NAUGHT FOR
US TO FEAR, EH?

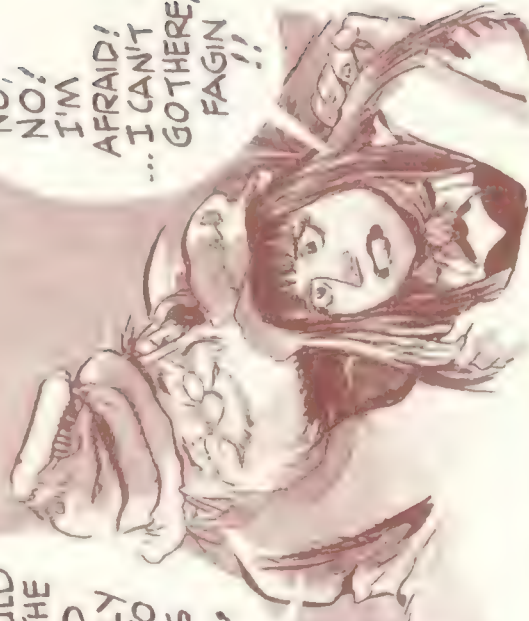


NOW, IF WE COULD
FIND SOMEONE
WHO COULD GET
HIM OUT...



AHA...
NANCY!
YOU COULD
GO TO THE
JAIL AND
POLITELY
OFFER TO
PAY HIS
BAIL,
SEE?

NO, NO!
I'M
AFRAID!
... I CAN'T
GO THERE,
FAGIN
!!



TOO
BAD!
SHE WILL
NOT
DO IT,
SIKES!



WE'RE
SUNK
IF SHE
WON'T
DO IT!
GRRRR!



NOW, NANCY... YOU
WILL GO TO THE
JAIL LIKE WE ASK!

NO!
NO!
PLEASE,
I'M
AFRAID!

WHICH IS YER
AFRAID OF MORE?
ME? OR THEM?
EH, EH, EH?

...AND BRING
OLIVER BACK
TO US, DEAR!

...IS THERE
A YOUNG
BOY AMONG
YOU? HE'D
BE A NEW
PRISONER
Y' SEE.

HERE NOW!
WHAT IS THIS GIRL
DOING IN THE
PRISON YARD?

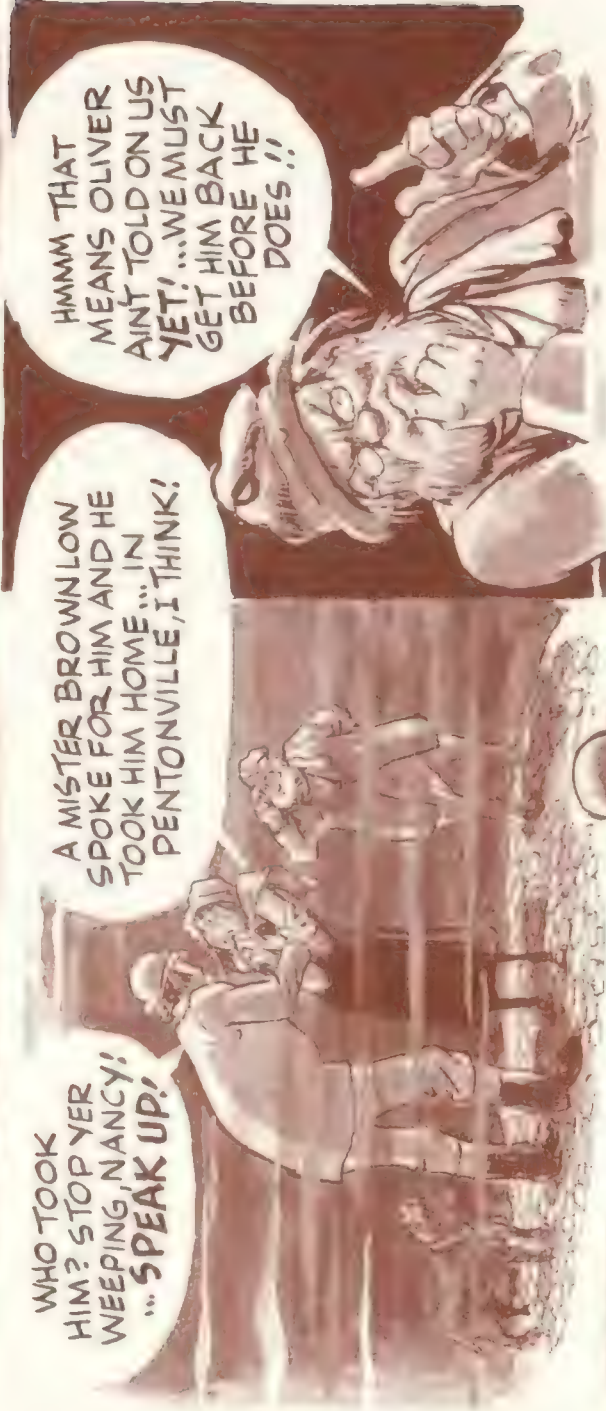
I'VE COME
TO PAY YOUNG
OLIVER TWIST'S
FINE, Y' SEE, I
AM HIS AUNT!

AH,
YER
TOO
LATE
GIRL!

...TOO LATE INDEED!
THE LAD, QUITE SICK,
WAS FOUND INNOCENT
AND DISCHARGED... AYE,
A MAN SPOKE UP FOR
HIM AND TOOK THE BOY
TO HIS HOME. 'T WAS
PENTONVILLE... A
MR. BROWNLOW,
I BELIEVE!

OH,
THANK
YOU,
SIR!

But Nancy had bad news for us.



At the Brownlows' home, Oliver soon recovered from his fainting in the magistrate's office.



In London's streets, Sikes and my boys were persistently searching for Oliver.



IT'S
OLIVER
...GET
HIM !!

LOOK!
AROUND THE
CORNER,
SIKES!

BUT

HAH!
FAGIN, LOOK
WHAT
I FOUND!

PLEASE,
PLEASE...
LET ME
GO!



WELCOME
BACK, DEAR
LI'L OLIVER!
WE MISSED
YOU!

PLEASE,
FAGIN...WHAT
WILL MISTER
BROWNLOW
THINK OF
ME IF I
DON'T RETURN?

WH...
WAIT,
OLIVER!!

NO, NO,
SIKES, HAVE
MERCY, HE IS
BUT A BOY!

SIKES,
SIKES!
I CAN
ASSURE
YOU, I'LL
MAKE
A GOOD
BOY OF
HIM!

YOU HAD
BETTER, FAGIN!
I'LL BE COMING
BACK...I'LL...
BEBACK!

NOW, M'BOY,
YOU ARE BACK
SAFE N' SOUND
WITH OL' FAGIN!

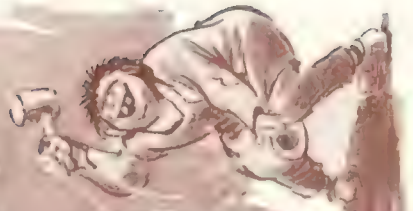


SOON YOU'LL
BE WORKIN' AT
THE TRADE I
TAUGHT YOU!

WE'LL
ALL
BE RICH
AS ROYALTY



'CAUSE
WE'RE
ALL IN
FAGIN'S
FAMILY



So, once more we had our Oliver back on the streets.

C'MON,
OLIVER,
CHEER
UP!



WE GOT
WORK
TO DO!



Things was going very well again for me ... until Sikes showed up.



SIKES?

AYE, FAGIN!

I HAVE FOUND A RICH JOB! ...EASY TO PLUCK!

NOTHING DANGEROUS NOW, SIKES...I WON'T HAVE ANY ROUGHNESS...! JUST OUR USUAL STYLE!



CHERTSEY MANSION...WAITIN' TO BE PLUCKED! ...THE WAY IN IS BY A SMALL WINDOW, Y'SEE!

HMM, FOR THAT Y'LL NEED A SMALL BOY.



NOW, LET ME THINK... WHO DO WE HAVE?

OLIVER! COME, YER JUST RIGHT..Y'LL JOIN MY MAN, CRACKIT!

*That night outside the Chertsey
mansion ...*



OH...I...MUST
WARN THE GOOD
PEOPLE OF THIS
HOUSE...CAN'T
LET SIKES DO
THIS!





BEWARE!
YOU ARE
ABOUT
TO BE
ROBBED!

I HEAR A
ROBBER
DOWN THERE!

BANG!



I SHOT ONE
OF THEM
DOWNSTAIRS!

IT FRIGHTENED
OFF THE REST OF
THEM... WE'LL NEVER
CATCH THEM!



THEY MUST HAVE
TRIED TO GET IN BY
THIS WINDOW... WHERE
IS THE ONE YOU
SHOT??

HERE, HE'S JUST A
LAD... HE'S ONLY
WOUNDED! LET'S GET
HIM UPSTAIRS TO
MISTRESS MAYLIE!

OH DEAR ... THE
POOR CHILD HAS A
FLESH WOUND! THE
GROUNDSKEEPERS
SAY HE WAS ONE
OF THE ROBBERS!

YOU MAY GO
NOW, JAMES!
... THANK YOU.

YES,
MISTRESS
MAYLIE.

*It so
happened that
Mr. Maylie
was Mr.
Brownlow's
lawyer.*

AND NOW,
TELL ME YOUR
STORY, YOUNG
MAN?

MY NAME IS OLIVER.
TWIST ... I WAS FORCED
TO ACCOMPANY THOSE
ROBBERS! BUT I
DID TRY TO WARN
YOU, MA'AM.

HE'S
A
BRAVE
LAD!

... AN HONEST
SOUL ... WE'LL
CARE FOR HIM.
... SEND FOR
THE DOCTOR
TO TREAT HIS
WOUND!

*So Oliver found a new home with the
Maylies in Chertsey, to Mr. Brownlow's relief.*

...AND NEXT
MONTH YOU
SHALL HAVE A
MERRY VISIT HERE
IN THE COUNTRY!

NOW THAT
WILL PUT SOME
COLOR INTO YOUR
CHEEKS, EH, OLIVER?

*I lost track of Oliver ... try as I might
I could not find him.
One evening an evil-looking stranger
visited me ...*

HERE NOW!
...WHAT ARE YER
LOOKIN' FOR??

THAT'S MY
BUSINESS!

MY
NAME IS
MONKS!
...I'M HERE
ABOUT
OLIVER!

AHHH,
TOO LATE!
THE DARLIN'
IS GONE!!
...MY HEART
IS BROKEN!

HMMMMM...NOW
I WONDER WHO HE IS
AND WHAT HE WANTS?!
...WELL, NO MATTER...
I'VE OTHER MATTERS
THAT CONCERN ME!

BAH!
NOTHING
HERE!
BLAST!

GET OUT
SIR...!!
OUT!!

Later I learned that Monks made his way to a tavern frequented by the beadle who was at the workhouse where Oliver was born.



PARDON, SIR!
...MAY I JOIN YOU
HERE FOR A BIT?
...ER... MY NAME
IS MONKS!

BUMBLE IS MINE!
SIT!... I WAS THE BEADLE
OF A WORKHOUSE
HEREABOUTS... HIC!
UNTIL THE BOARD
LET ME OUT!

WELL, AFTER A LONG AND
DISCREET INVESTIGATION I LEARNED
THAT TWELVE YEARS AGO A BOY WAS
BORN TO A POOR YOUNG WOMAN IN
YOUR WORKHOUSE... WHEN HE WAS
ABLE TO, THE LAD RAN AWAY!

AH, YES, YES...
I REMEMBER... HIS
NAME WAS OLIVER
TWIST... YES,
INDEED!



...I SEEK THE OLD WOMAN
WHO, I LEARNED, CARED
FOR OLIVER'S MOTHER'S
BODY BEFORE Y'BURIED
HER... EH, EH?

'TWAS OL' SALLY WHO WAS THERE
AFTER SHE DIED... LATER, SALLY ON
HER OWN DEATHBED TOLD MY WIFE,
HERE, WHAT SHE TOOK FROM THE
DEAD GIRL!

HERE'S
MY
WIFE,
SIR!

...YES, SALLY GAVE ME
A LOCKET SHE OWNED,
...SHE TOOK FROM THE
DEAD GIRL... WHAT'LL
Y'PAY FOR 'EM ??

I'LL PAY
YOU WELL!!
HERE'S A
BAG OF COIN!
...NOW GIVE
THEM TO
ME!

HMM... NOW,
WHY DID HE WANT
THAT TRINKET?
...HE CERTAINLY
PAID US WELL
FOR IT!



The next day I had another visit from Monks.





NANCY!!
... THAT YOU?
'LISTENIN' IN
ON ME... EH?



Nancy ran off to the Maylie family. I reckon that she learned from Sikes' boasting where they were sheltering Oliver.



It was not hard to guess that Nancy told the Maylies what she overheard.

SO, OLIVER IS AN
HEIR... AND THAT EVIL
MR. MONKS IS ONLY HIS
HALF-BROTHER... WHY,
DEAR, DID YOU TAKE
SUCH A RISK TO COME
HERE TO TELL US?

YES... WE'LL
GET YOU TO
SAFETY, OLIVER!
WE'LL SEND YOU
TO MR. BROWNLOW.
HE WILL KNOW
WHAT TO DO!

BUT FIRST,
WE MUST HELP
PROTECT
NANCY!

TO SAVE OLIVER
FROM SIKES, HE'S IN
A TERRIBLE RAGE!
AND WILL KILL HIM!
I MUST HIDE OLIVER!!

NO, NO, NO!!
OLIVER!!
... LET ME
GO NOW!

YOU
CAN'T
GO
BACK
TO
SIKES!

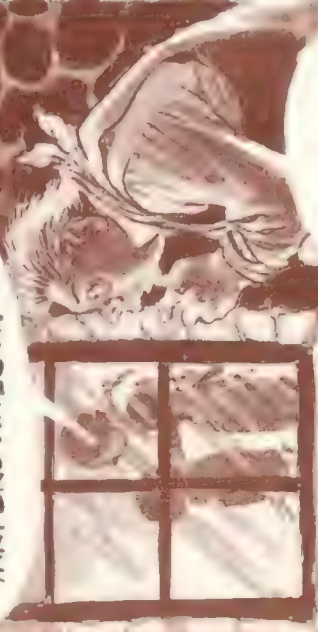
OH, I
CAN'T HELP
MYSELF!
... BAD AS
HE IS... I
STILL DO
CARE FOR
HIM, Y'SEE

WAIT... MR. BROWNLOW
HAS A LAWYER FRIEND-
MR. GRIMWIG... HE IS
INFLUENTIAL AND CAN
HELP US, NO MATTER
WHAT... NANCY!

?!
?

GOOD BYE!

DON'T FRET, OLIVER!
TOMORROW WE'LL TAKE
YOU TO YOUR FRIEND
MR. BROWNLOW!



WELL, BOY,
I'M WAITING—
SPEAK UP!



I FOLLOWED
NANCY TO
THE MAYLIE
PLACE LIKE
Y'TOLD ME!
...HONEST
FAGIN!!



MORE!!
TELL ME...
I PAID YOU!
I PAID YOU!



...I HEARD
NANCY TELL
EVERYTHING
TO THE LADY!
...THEY ARE
SENDING
OLIVER TO
BROWNLOW
...HE'LL LOOK
AFTER
HIM!

WELL,
FAGIN,
ANYTHING
YET ABOUT
OLIVER?



OLIVER IS
ALIVE...HE'LL BE
LIVING WITH A
MR. BROWNLOW,
AN IMPORTANT
MAN... OLIVER IS
LOST TO US
SIKES, LOST!



HOW
DO YOU
KNOW
THIS?

I HIRED
MY BEST BOY
TO FOLLOW
NANCY...SHE
VISITED THE
MAYLIE HOUSE,
WHERE OLIVER
WAS BEING
CARED FOR,
Y'SEE!





Y' PEACHED
ON US, DIDN'T
YOU? DIDN'T
YOU!?



I SEEN
HER WITH
MISSIS
MAYLIE !

SHHH,
CLAYPOLE,
SHHHHHH

GRRRR

I ONLY
TRIED TO
SAVE OLIVER
FROM YOUR
ANGER!



STOP,
SIKES!
HAVE
MERCY!
NANCY IS
A LOYAL
GIRL!



NO ONE
PEACHES ON
SIKES!





I knew, of course, where the brute would go. In a mortal panic, Sikes ran to the docks. There he hoped to hide among old thieves he knew.





NOT HERE... IT'S
MURDER... AND
WE WANT NO
PART OF IT!



I KNOW... I
NEED A PLACE
TO HIDE... EH?
OLD FRIEND?

THE
POLICE
IS LOOKIN'
FER YER,
SIKES!



AWAY WITH YER!

AWAY,
SIKES!

*That night
the police
searched
all of London ...*



RUN, ME
DARLIN' BOYS!
THE POLICE ARE
SWARMIN' WE'RE
IN FOR IT!



Oh, I ran...on tired legs...but not quick enough...



WE HAVE
YOU NOW,
FAGIN,
Y'OLD FOX!

STOP
SQUIRMIN'!
MY, HE'S A
FIGHTIN',
LITTLE JEW!



Meanwhile, Sikes was running through the alleys ... now haunted by a ghost...



GO
AWAY,
NANCY!
...GO
AWAY!



"...TO
THE
ROOF!"

S...SHE
FOLLOWS
ME...

AHA!

SHE'S GONE
NOW... WHEW,
I'M FREE
OF HER!

NOW I'LL JUST
SWING TO THE
OTHER ROOF
AND ESCAPE!



OH, NO, NO!
NOT YOU
AGAIN ?!

GO AWAY!
GO AWAY!
GO AWAY!



AHA... THERE'S
THAT SCOUNDREL,
SIKES, WE'VE
BEEN LOOKING
FOR !

HUNG HIMSELF
...THE WRETCH!



With Sikes dead there was no one to testify to my innocence. Well, I was locked up in Newgate Prison, where I was tried and sentenced in short order.

...THEREFORE
THIS COURT DOES
SENTENCE YOU
TO BE HANGED
AT A TIME AND
DATE PRESCRIBED
BY LAW!

NO! NO! NO!
IT IS NOT JUST!
...I DID NOT
STEAL... I ONLY
RECEIVED...!
I HURT NONE!



I lay in my cell exhausted from writhing and flailing against my sorry fate... Aided by his influential new benefactor and patron Mr. Brownlow, Oliver was allowed to visit me here. His visit added to my comfort and helped me endure the agony of an undeserved fate.




MR. BROWNLOW AND MR. MAYLIE WERE VERY DETERMINED TO FIND OUT WHO I REALLY AM! SO, THEY SEARCHED AND FOUND MR. BUMBLE AT HIS TAVERN, WHERE THEY MADE HIM TELL THEM THE WHOLE TRUTH!

WELL, MR. BUMBLE FINALLY ADMITTED THAT THEIR OLD NURSE STOLE THE LOCKET FROM MY DYING MOTHER... LATER, SHE GAVE IT TO MR. BUMBLE'S WIFE, WHO THEN SOLD IT TO A MR. MONKS.

MR.
MAYLIE
AND MR.
BROWNLOW
RAN TO
MONKS' ROOMS
"...JUST IN
TIME, FOR HE
WAS 'ABOUT
TO RUN
AWAY!

MR.
MAYLIE
WAS QUICK
AND
BROUGHT
MONKS
DOWN!






WELL, MONKS CONFESSED!
...HIS REAL NAME IS LEEFORD.
HE IS THE EARLIER SON OF MY
FATHER, SIR EDWARD LEEFORD,
WHO HAD BEEN MARRIED
**BEFORE HIS AFFAIR WITH
MY MOTHER!** SO, I AM
SIR LEEFORD'S SON TOO!

IT IS A LOT TO KNOW
FOR A LAD SO YOUNG!
...AND WHAT ELSE DID
BROWNLOW AND MR.
MAYLIE GET FROM
MONKS... HE'S BEEN
TRACKING YOU ALL
THESE YEARS?
EH?

AND, I AM TOLD, WHEN SIR
LEEFORD FAILED TO MARRY MY
MOTHER... SHE **LEFT**. PREGNANT
WITH ME AND DESTITUTE, SHE
FOUND HER WAY TO THE OLD
WORKHOUSE, WHERE SHE
GAVE BIRTH TO ME!



NOW, I CAN FILL
IN THE REST FOR
YOU, MY BOY! WHEN
SIR LEEFORD DIED
HIS ESTATE WENT
TO HIS HEIRS!!
...TWO SONS...
MONKS AND
YOU!

WELL,
IF HE IS
MY HALF-
BROTHER,
WHY DID HE
WANT THE
LOCKET THAT
WAS STOLEN
FROM MY
MOTHER
IN THE
WORKHOUSE
??

Y'SEE, EVEN
THOUGH HE'S A CHILD
OF AN EARLIER MARRIAGE
HE WOULD NEVER THESS
HAVE TO **SHARE THE**
ESTATE WITH YOU... YOU'RE
HIS BROTHER! THE LOCKET
HAS Y'R MOTHER'S PORTRAIT
AND THERE IS WRITING
ON THE BACK OF IT
THAT **PROVES YOUR**
RELATIONSHIP!

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THE
LOCKET??
HE DID **NOT**
HAVE IT
WHEN MR.
MAYLIE
SEARCHED
HIM!

I HAVE
THE
LOCKET!

...YOU HAVE
THE LOCKET,
FAGIN? WHERE
IS IT??

OH...
HE DOES
NOT
ASK
OF
MY
FATE!!

THEY ARE
GOING TO
HANG ME!
...OH MY
GOD!

MY
FUTURE
DEPENDS
ON THAT
LOCKET!

HIS
FUTURE?
HAGH...
I HAVE
NO
FUTURE!

PLEASE
FAGIN, TELL
ME WHERE
IT IS !!

SHEMA
YISROEL
ADONAI
ELOHENU
ADONAI
ECHOD

VERY
WELL... I
GIVE YOU
A FUTURE,
BOY!

IT IS IN MY HOUSE
...HALEWAY UP THE
CHIMNEY... IN A CANVAS
SACK ... IT IS YOURS,
OLIVER, YOURS!

THANK
YOU,
FAGIN,
THANK
YOU!



Ah, it was a bitter departure... We clung together, I as a drowning man who holds on to a floating log, and Oliver as a mourner unable yet to separate from an attachment, the memory of which will forever remain with him. Finally the boy gathered control of his emotions enough so he could disengage.


WAIT, WAIT,
OLIVER, MY
DEAR!...DON'T
LEAVE ME YET!

I MUST GO NOW, FAGIN.
MR. BROWNLOW IS
WAITING TO HELP ME
RECOVER THE LOCKET!
IT'S A MATTER OF GREAT
URGENCY!!

IS NOT
MY LAST HOUR
ON EARTH
A MATTER
OF GREAT
URGENCY??


SO...
IT ISN'T
DIFFICULT TO
IMAGINE A
HAPPY ENDING
FOR THEM!
OLIVER RAN
WITH HIS PATRON
TO MY PLACE...

UPSTAIRS,
MR. BROWNLOW!




IT IS EASY
TO IMAGINE HOW
THE PROOF OF
OLIVER'S
BIRTHRIGHT
WAS GREETED BY
THE BROWNLOW
HOUSEHOLD, AND
HOW THE BOY'S
PLACE IN THEIR
SOCIETY WAS
CELEBRATED!

WELL THEY
FOUND THE LOCKET!
... THE BOY'S FUTURE
IS ASSURED!



FOR
THIS
YOU
INVITED
ME HERE,
MR. FAGIN?
... TO HEAR
YOU?



... AND OF COURSE
THE CHILDLESS MR.
BROWNLOW WOULD
LEGALLY ADOPT
OLIVER AS HIS SON
AND HEIR... A VERY
HAPPY ENDING!

I'VE ASKED
YOU HERE TO
CONFRONT A MAN
YOU WRONGFULLY
PORTRAYED! ONE WHO
WILL SOON BE SWINGING
LIFELESS IN THAT YARD!
... DOOMED TO WEAR
FOR ETERNITY THAT
WARPED AND EVIL
IMAGE!

HOW ELSE
WOULD YOU HAVE
IT, FAGIN?? ARE
YOU NOT AMONG
THE WRETCHES WHO
INHABIT THE COLD
UNDERWORLD OF
LONDON?... IN OLIVER
TWIST, I TRY TO SHOW
THE PRINCIPLE OF
GOOD THAT DOES
SURVIVE THROUGH
EVERY ADVERSE
CIRCUMSTANCE!

IT IS
A TRUTH
THAT
NEEDS
TO BE
TOLD!

I AM
FAGIN, A
MEMBER OF
A DISPERSED
BUT NOBLE
BREED! JEWS
WHO ARE OFTEN
FORCED BY
CIRCUMSTANCE
TO SURVIVE
IN THE FOUL,
FROWSY
DENS AND
SQUALID
MISERY OF
MIDNIGHT
LONDON,
ARE NOT
THIEVES
BY CHOICE!

TRUTH??
...IS REFERRING
TO A MAN ONLY
BY HIS RACE THE
TRUTH?... OR IS
"JEW" AS A WORD
FOR CRIMINAL
TRUE?... OR IS A
PICTURE OF A
JEW THAT IS
BASED UPON A
COMMON BIAS
...TRUTH??
HAH!!

... ARE THERE NO **GENTILE** MONEY
LENDERS OR SLY RECEIVERS OF
SUSPECT GOODS IN LONDON??
... IS THIS TRADE TRULY CONFINED
TO **JEWS** ALONE??

ARTISTS AND
WRITERS HAVE ALWAYS
DESCRIBED FOR US
WHOM WE FEAR AND WHOM
WE TRUST! YOU AND
YOUR KIND, THEREFORE,
ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE ENDURANCE
OF BIAS... IN THIS
CASE AGAINST
JEWS!

THAT IS ONLY
AN **ARGUABLE**
CASE, FAGIN!

HAH!
WHEN YOU DO
DESCRIBE
A KIND OF
CRIMINAL AS
A JEW IT MAKES
MY CASE
INARGUABLE!!

A JEW
IS NOT FAGIN
ANY MORE THAN
A GENTILE
IS SIKES!

AHEM!
EXCUSE ME,
SIR! Y' MUST
LEAVE NOW
MR. DICKENS,
... IT IS TIME!

GOODBYE, OLD
FAGIN... ER, OH, IN MY
LATER BOOKS I'LL TREAT
YOUR RACE MORE
EVENLY!



EPILOGUE

Fagin was hanged and buried ignominiously in a pauper's grave, together with others that fate had demeaned.



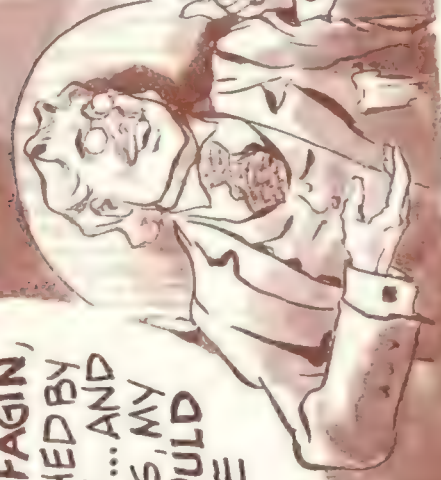
The young lad Oliver was adopted by Mr. Brownlow. He became a successful barrister who at last found out about a turning point in Fagin's life and his legacy.

I AM OLIVER
TWIST BROWNLOW!
...NOT LONG AGO I
HAD THE GOOD LUCK
TO MARRY ADELE, THE
GREAT GRAND DAUGHTER
OF EMMANUEL LOPEZ,
WHO THREW FAGIN OUT
OF HIS JEWISH SCHOOL!
YES...MY WIFE, OUT
OF LOVE FOR ME, DID
AGREE TO CONVERT
TO MY RELIGION
AND CONCERN
HERSELF WITH THE
STORY OF MY LIFE!



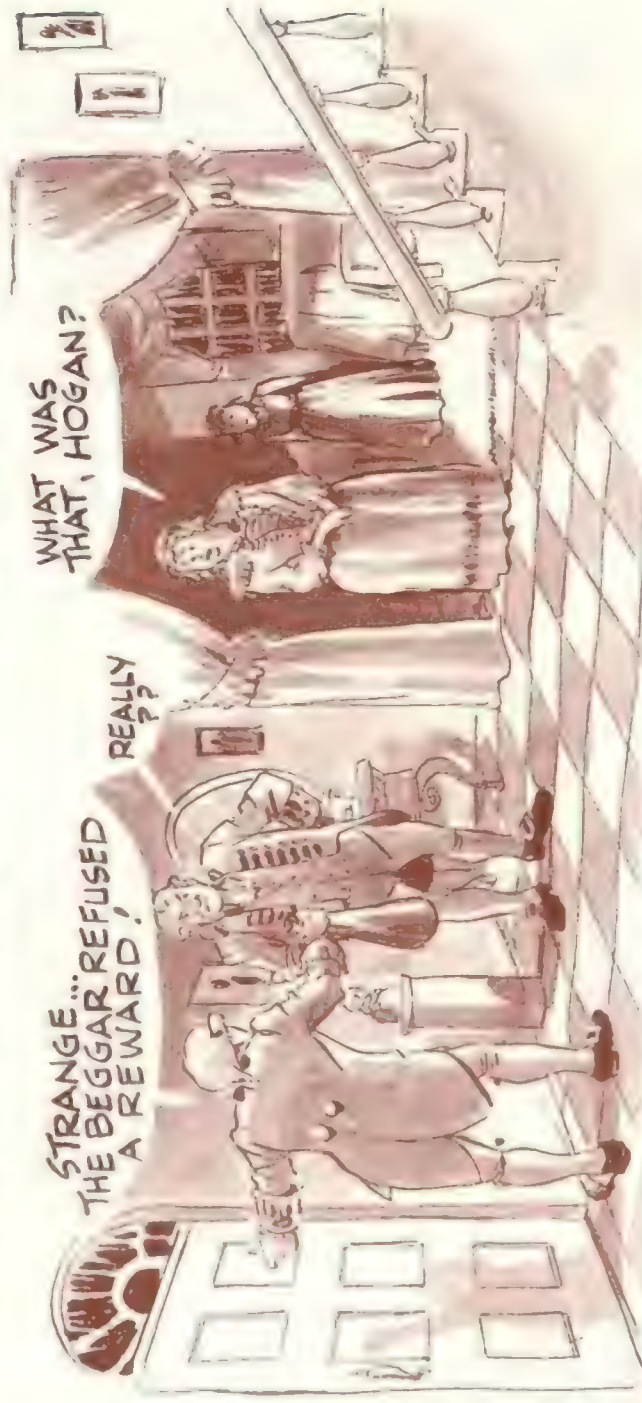
WHEN SHE LEARNED
OF MY BOYHOOD
CONNECTION WITH FAGIN,
SHE WAS ASTONISHED BY
THE COINCIDENCE...AND
WELL...PERHAPS, MY
DEAR, YOU SHOULD
RELATE THE
REST...

WELL...BEFORE I WAS BORN,
ONE EVENING ... MY MOTHER AND MY
GRANDMOTHER, REBECCA, WERE AT THE
HOME OF THE LATE MR. SALOMON.
THEY HELPED SETTLE HIS AFFAIRS
WHEN AN OLD MAN APPEARED AT
THE DOOR SEEKING TO RETURN
THINGS STOLEN FROM THE ESTATE
BY A THIEF NAMED SIKES.





'ERE, NOW OLD
MAN... 'ERE'S A
SHILLING... IT'S YER
REWARD... HOY!
WAIT!...



STRANGE...
THE BEGGAR REFUSED
A REWARD!

REALLY
??

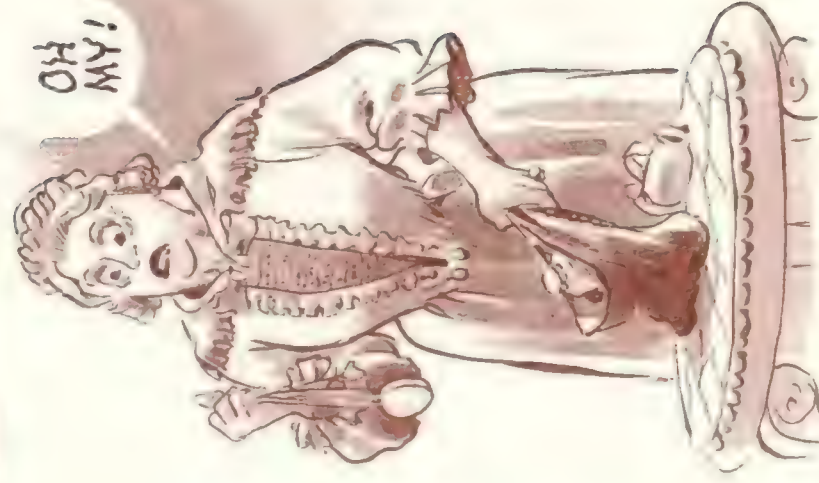
WHAT WAS
THAT, HOGAN?



OH... AN OLD
BEGGAR... HE ONLY
RETURNED THE THINGS
THAT WERE STOLEN
LAST WEEK!

LET
ME
SEE
THEM!

...AND HE
WOULD TAKE
NO REWARD,
MISS REBECCA!



OH
MY!



HOGAN...
IS HE STILL OUT
THERE... CAN
YOU CATCH HIM?

WHO
IS THIS?
HE'S
A NICE
LOOKING
YOUNG
BOY!



HOW DID
THE BEGGAR
LOOK?...I MEAN,
DESCRIBE HIM!

SCRUFFY,
MA'AM,
A GREY
BEARD!

FILTHY!



IT'S
A
LONG
STORY,
DEAR.

WHY
IS THIS
SUCH A
DISTURBANCE
TO YOU,
MOTHER
?

MANY YEARS AGO
MY FATHER, EMMANUEL
LOPEZ, AND ELEAZER
SALOMON BECAME
PARTNERS IN A SCHOOL
FOR POOR JEWISH
CHILDREN...

MY FATHER OWNED
THE BUILDING AND SO MR.
SALOMON PROVIDED THE
SERVICES OF HIS YOUNG
HOUSEBOY...A FAVORITE,
TO KEEP IT CLEAN!



I OFTEN VISITED THE SCHOOL, WHERE I MET THE YOUNG HOUSEBOY... WE FELL IN LOVE!... WE WERE SO YOUNG WE CARED NOTHING ABOUT CLASS OR PLACE!

ONE DAY MY FATHER CAUGHT US KISSING! ... ENRAGED BY SUCH FORWARDNESS, HE THREW THE YOUNG MAN OUT INTO THE STREET!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BOY?

NO ONE KNEW... HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE SLUMS OF LONDON! MR. SALOMON WAS HEART-BROKEN... YOU SEE, HE WAS A BACHELOR AND THOUGHT OF THE BOY AS HIS SON!

AND IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, I LOOKED AFTER THE GRIEVING OLD MAN AS A DAUGHTER MIGHT! ... FINALLY SALOMON DIED WITHOUT AN HEIR TO HIS GREAT WEALTH!

WHAT WAS THE BOY'S NAME?

HIS NAME WAS MOSES, MOSES FAGIN!

MOTHER, HOW
DID YOU KNOW
THAT THE OLD
BEGGAR WAS
FAGIN ?

NO BEGGAR RETURNS
LOOT AND DOES NOT
ACCEPT A REWARD !!
IT COULD ONLY BE FAGIN!
I KNOW IT!

AND, OF
COURSE, THE
PORTRAIT IN
THE LID... IT
LOOKS EXACTLY
AS I REMEMBER
HIM !

MR. SALOMON HAD THAT
PORTRAIT MADE OF FAGIN
AND SHOWED IT WHENEVER
HE COULD... HOPING SOME-
ONE MIGHT HAVE SEEN HIM!

SO
MOSES
FAGIN
NEVER
KNEW HE
WAS AN
HEIR
TO
WEALTH!

HERE, MY DEAR !
... I GIVE THIS WATCH TO
YOU! ... KEEP IT! IN THIS
WAY MOSES FAGIN
WILL, SYMBOLICALLY
AT LEAST, BELONG
TO A FAMILY !

YES, MOTHER!
AND I WILL PASS IT ON
TO MY CHILD!



MY MOTHER
DIED AS I WAS BORN.
AS THE FIRST AND ONLY
CHILD, OF COURSE, I
RECEIVED THE LOCKET...
BUT I KNEW NOTHING
OF FAGIN UNTIL I
MARRIED OLIVER.



ALAS...
THE ONLY TESTIMONY
TO HIS LIFE IS
A BOOK AND A
PRESUMED HEIRLOOM!

Afterword

Throughout history, certain fictional characters in our literature have achieved an illusion of reality due to their popularity. In the main, they became enduring stereotypes and influenced social judgment. Shylock the Jew and Sherlock Holmes the detective are classic examples.

Fagin, created by Charles Dickens in *Oliver Twist*, ultimately became one such "profile" of a Jew that embedded itself in popular culture and prejudice. In truth, the author never intended to defame the Jewish people, but by referring to Fagin as "the Jew" throughout the book he abetted the prejudice against them. Over the years, *Oliver Twist* became a staple of juvenile literature, and the stereotype was perpetuated.

Despite his treatment of Fagin, Charles Dickens maintained that he was not an anti-Semite. He did use anti-Jewish epithets and offhand remarks in his letters and conversation, which were common in the language of the era. Dickens once referred to Richard Benteley, his (Gentile) English publisher, as

"a thundering old Jew." However, in books such as *A Child's History of England*, he deems "cruel and inexcusable" the persecution and expulsion of Jews by Edward I in 1290. Later, he condemned the well-known Thomas Carlyle's aversion to Jews. In a speech to the Westminster Jewish Free School in 1854, Dickens proclaimed, "I do my part in the assertion of their [Jews'] civil rights. . . . I have expressed strong abhorrence of their persecution in old time."

The following segments from Dickens's foreword to the third edition of *Oliver Twist* in 1841 indicate his intentions by explaining his use of Fagin for the role and by implication justifying his use of the label "Jew" to describe him.

The greater part of this tale was originally published in a magazine. When I completed it and put it forth in its present form three years ago, I fully expected it would be objected to on some very high moral grounds in some very high moral quarters.

The result did not fail to prove the justice of my anticipations.

It is, it seems, a very coarse and shocking circumstance, that some of the characters in these pages are chosen from the most criminal and degraded of London's population; that Sikes is a thief and Fagin a receiver of stolen goods; that the boys are pick-pockets and the girl is a prostitute.

It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really do exist; to paint them in all their wretchedness, in all the squalid poverty of their lives; to show them as they really are, forever skulking uneasily through the dirtiest paths of life, with the great, black, ghastly gallows closing up their prospects, turn them where they may; it appeared to me that to do this, would be to attempt something which was greatly needed and which would be a service to society. And therefore I did it as best I could.

Further, after receiving a letter of complaint from Mrs. Eliza Davis, the wife of a Jewish banker, about twenty years later, Dickens tried to eliminate most of the frequent references to Fagin as a Jew in an 1867 edition of *Oliver Twist*. This, however, was too late, for the earlier and well-distributed popular editions still in use today contain the earlier version that uses "Jew" to refer to Fagin.

Nonetheless, I believe that Dickens's stated intention to describe the conditions of the time places the burden of reportorial accuracy upon him. It has always troubled me that Fagin "the Jew" never got fair treatment, and I challenge Charles Dickens and his illustrator, George Cruikshank, for their

description and delineation of Fagin as a classic stereotypical Jew. I believe this depiction was based on ill-considered evidence, imitation, and popular ignorance. Cartoonists certainly understand how easy it is to rely on a common image in the visual language to portray a character, but like the mistakes of illustrators before him, Cruikshank's misuse of a necessary staple in portraying Fagin, one that was so common to contemporary publications, is a contribution to further reprehensible stereotyping of Jews by bigots throughout history.

The Jewish community of London around 1800 consisted of two main groups, the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim. The Sephardim originally came from Portugal and Spain to settle in England after fleeing the Spanish Inquisition. Because they were mostly educated, they were able to achieve an acceptable position in the English community. England was attractive to Jews because it was then one of the more liberal societies, with some religious tolerance and an accessible legal system. The Sephardim assimilated easily and for the most part became professionals, tradesmen, and financiers. Their numbers increased over the years with the arrival of others who had also fled Spain but had sought refuge in Holland. The growth of a lively trade between London and Amsterdam led to an increase in Jewish immigration.

Until about 1700, the Sephardim were the dominant Jewish population in England, but the "lower class" who arrived during the eighteenth century were mostly Ashkenazim. They came from Germany and

Middle Europe, where they had lived in small villages until driven out by intolerance, repression, and pogroms. Rural life and peasant culture had rendered them less educated and cruder in their ways. As a result, when they arrived in London they had difficulty assimilating. Like all new, poor immigrant arrivals throughout history, they clung to old ghetto habits and social behavior. Impoverished and illiterate, they took up marginal occupations in the grimier quarters of London. It is reasonable to assume that Fagin came from such origins.

In my opinion, the limning of Jews by illustrators of Dickens's time was most likely inaccurate with regard to Fagin's appearance. Because of their Eastern European origins, Ashkenazic Jews likely had features that had come to resemble the German physiognomy. There were many blond Jews, as a result of rapes that occurred during pogroms. However, the popular illustrations of Jews, including Cruikshank's, were based on the appearance of the Sephardim, whose features when they arrived were sharper, with dark hair and complexions, the result of their four-hundred-year sojourn among the Latin and Mediterranean peoples. The careless disregard of this demography and its impact on cultural acceptance made it necessary to reintroduce Fagin at long last.

The lithograph prints and etchings that were popular in England in the eighteenth century provided the public with satirical commentary on social life of the day. They were sold, sometimes even by Jewish peddlers, on the streets of English cities, in

print shops, and in book stalls. These were generally collected in albums or hung in dens, libraries, or workplaces.

In Charles Dickens's time, the most popular creators of these prints included Thomas Rowlandson, Henry Wigstead, George Woodward, Isaac Cruikshank (father of George Cruikshank, who illustrated *Oliver Twist*), and James Gilray. Like the great English artist Hogarth before them, they enjoyed considerable professional stature and popular fame. It was their delineations that contributed to the perpetuation of the negative stereotype of Jews and that provide a record of the public perceptions of that time.

In America during the twentieth century, this genre of illustration and cartoon appeared in newspapers, humor magazines, and family publications that catered to the public taste. Because of this country's large immigrant population the ethnic caricatures were less vitriolic but persisted nevertheless. The influential political drawings by Thomas Nast and fellow political cartoonists that dwelt on the stereotypes of corrupt politicians were successors to their English forerunners. The more social observations of Charles Dana Gibson and James Montgomery Flagg used depictions that mostly avoided exaggerated ethnic characterization.

I include below several examples of prints and illustrations from that period, which demonstrate the limning of Jews by the eighteenth-century illustrators who were most influential at that time.

My version of Fagin is, I believe, a more truthful stereotype.



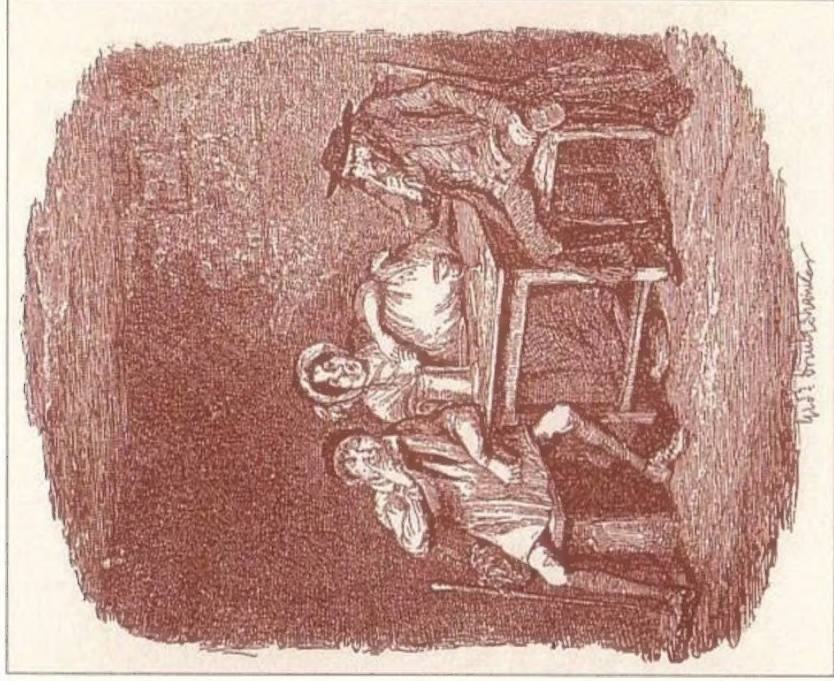
An aquatint etching by Henry Wigstead (1785) showing two Jewish old-clothes dealers in London buying clothes from a domestic. The title, "Traffic," is accompanied by dialogue.



Two etchings by Thomas Rowlandson (1808) in which Jews are shown as typical of their trade. Rowlandson was a very popular cartoonist of the time.



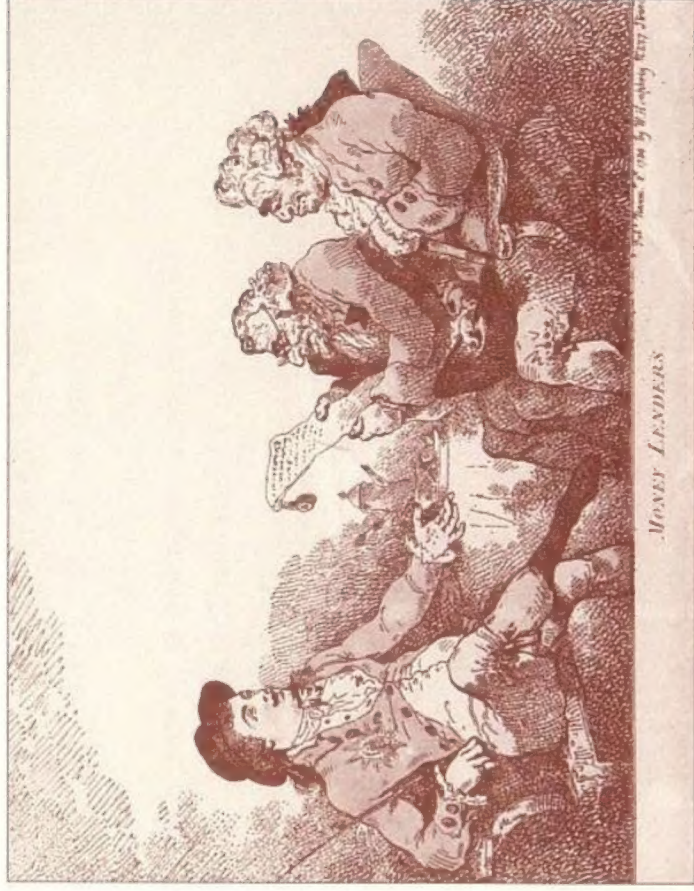
These two published prints, "I've Got de Monish" (circa 1792) and "Commandment, get all you can" (circa 1830), are examples of popular images that were widely sold in London. They helped create the accepted public stereotype of a Jew.



In Cruikshank's version of Fagin, he shows a "Sephardic" physiognomy. My version of Fagin is based on the more Germanic face, which I believe is more truthful.



"Money Lenders"



"A Jew and a Bishop"

Isaac Cruikshank (left) and Thomas Rowlandson (above) continually characterized Jews as having physiognomies different from Gentiles.

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